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EDITOR:

THE RIGHT REV. MGR CANON G. D. SMITH, D.D., PH.D.

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The CLERGY REVIEW

NEW SERIES VOL. XLI NO. I JANUARY 1956

A THIRD CENTURY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

THE most remarkable thing about Professor Toynbee's twenty-one contemporary civilizations is, of course, that they are not contemporary (except possibly in the sense of Mr T. S. Elliot's phrase that "all is always now"); they are separated by vast periods of time. Still, when we consider his own illustration of the Greek world of Thucydides as "contemporary" with the world of the 1919 Peace Conference and so to be studied side by side with it, we can see what he means. In this sense the Christian communities of the first centuries of the Church are "contemporary" with the Christian communities rising today, and to compare one with the other can be illuminating. The fact that Dr Toynbee seems to admit in the concluding volumes of his great work the possibility of a certain development, as the fruit of experience in the dimensions of space and time that separate these contemporaries, suggests that such a study might be still more rewarding.

The document known as the Syriac Didascalia gives the most complete picture we possess of an early Christian community of the pre-Constantine period. Written some time in the course of the third century for the instruction of an unnamed community in Syria, possibly in the neighbourhood of Beroea, it claims to be, after the easy manner of the age, the work of the apostles, composed at the first Council of Jerusalem to combat heresies in the Church, its title: *The Catholic Teaching of the Twelve Apostles and Holy Disciples of Our Saviour*.¹ The impression given is of a community, a parish, of perhaps 1000 persons, converts from paganism for the most part, though the author himself was more likely of Jewish origin, possibly a bishop and perhaps also, from his liking for medical similes, a physician. His scripture knowledge is considerable—one quarter

¹ I am using the German text and notes of Achelis and Fleming, *Die Syrisch Didaskalia* (Leipzig, 1904). The original Greek is no longer extant and this text is formed from a collation of fragments of a sixth-century Latin version with a probably older Syriac translation.

of the whole treatise consists of quotations from the Bible—and he is especially conscious of the person of Christ as portrayed in the Gospels. On the other hand he does not scruple to alter the chronology of the Passion in order to explain the current fasting regulations. His strong, repeated warnings against converts from Judaism who wish to impose their former ritual observances suggest that there were not far away strong communities of such: "To the Jews God said in the Law: Listen, Israel! and to this very day they have not listened."

He appears to be writing in a period of freedom from organized persecution (the community seems in any case to be in a secluded situation where the worst fury might pass over it), but Christians are warned that circumstances may arise in which a public profession of faith will be necessary, leading perhaps to death or exile: "the games, wild animals or the mines".

The daily life suggested is one of the utmost simplicity. Detailed instructions are given concerning dress. The women may not wear finery; no shoes, not curl their hair; cosmetics are not allowed: all this through fear of the appearance of wishing to attract the attentions of men. For the same reason they must veil their faces when on the street. They may use the public baths, even the mixed baths, but only if others are not available, and then at a time when the baths are normally empty. Similarly the men must avoid ornament in dress—no ring, for example; and they, too, go barefoot. They should cut their hair but not the beard; they must use neither comb nor hair-cream. Above all they must avoid any suspicion of running after women; unchastity is the greatest danger to their religion. For this reason they must not be on the streets unnecessarily; their place is in the home, where they may work, or, if circumstances permit, read. Should they wish to go out, they may visit a friend in the Faith. A husband must regard his wife as an equal, and she, for her part, must submit to him; quarrelling must be avoided.

Great stress is laid on work, so that the proper use of leisure raises no problems: "All, every day and at all times, be industrious at your work, so that the whole of your lives you be either constant in the church or active at your work, and never idle." And: "A lazy man can never be a believer."

The wife's task is domestic work. It is considered most important that the children should be trained to avoid idleness; they should be taught a craft. Adopted boys should learn a craft and, when they reach due age, be provided with the necessary tools in order to support themselves.

Little value, however, is attached to asceticism in the sense of self-inflicted bodily austerity. The fasting days are comparatively few and the author speaks disapprovingly of vegetarians and of those who refrain from marriage on ascetical grounds: all the gifts of God, it is considered, should be used thankfully, and to abstain from them is a mark of heresy. A second marriage on the death of one partner, though not encouraged, is not forbidden, even for the clergy. In the case of a bishop St Paul's *unius uxoris virum* is quoted, yet quoted almost as an exhortation rather than a concession: it is assumed that the bishop will normally be married and have grown children. The ascetical life as a permanent state seems to be unknown, except in its extreme form as a mark of certain heretical sects. Theoretically all were of The Perfect. There is no mention of the state of virginity, of the consecrated virgin living a secluded life within a family, as we know existed elsewhere: an adopted girl is placed in a family that has boys of her own age, so that she may ultimately marry one of them, "marry into" the family; there is apparently no thought that she might prefer the state of virginity.

The community seems to consist of a good middle class, with no extremes of riches or poverty, yet including also a number of people of property able to make quite considerable gifts to the community. Personages of consequence in public life do not as yet appear to have entered the community. We notice also a certain anxiety lest the acceptance of gifts from the very rich may impair its independence.

What emerges most clearly of all from this document is the extraordinarily strong community sense of these people, their feeling of solidarity and consciousness of being one body in Christ with a consequent communion in all things spiritual and temporal. The community, the parish, is for them a microcosm of the Church as a whole, the kingdom of God, the Holy City, come down to this particular spot of earth. At the head is the

bishop, he is the "image of God", "holds the place of God"; he is priest, prophet, leader, king, mediator between God and the faithful, receiver of the word and guardian and herald of it, knowing the scriptures, teaching of God and interpreting His will, bearing the sins of all and liable to render an account for all, himself answerable to no one but God. He is in fact ultimately responsible for all that happens in the community and for all its needs: for food and clothing, the reception of strangers, the care of the sick, provision for orphans and widows.

We find here no adoption problems, no need for advertisements in the local paper; the bishop simply assigns an orphan to a suitable family and it is assumed that the child will be received without demur. We look in vain for any division between secular and religious, lay and ecclesiastical interests and activities, between material and spiritual needs: there is none. A certain parallel is drawn between the office of bishop and that of the civil ruler, but the power of the bishop surpasses that of the king; the latter "rules only over the body", "the bishop over soul and body". There is thus no room for lay and clerical as two separate, autonomous spheres of influence; the community is one body which is "a royal priesthood", and it is significant that the clerical state seems to merge almost imperceptibly into the lay in the order of widows, who for some purposes are considered as of the clerical order, for other purposes, and more properly, as belonging to the laity. The connexion is an organic one; the layman, though not a priest, is a member of an organic body which exercises the priesthood through certain members.

Though the bishop as head of the body is responsible for all, it is not expected that he will personally control everything nor that there shall be continual reference to him personally. Where his counsel is required he shall normally be approached through the deacons, "for one cannot approach Almighty God except through Christ". Still, it is made quite clear that the ultimate responsibility for everything does remain with him and it is so comprehensive that they "shall do nothing without the bishop".¹

¹ One who has heard the Rule of St Benedict read daily over a period of years cannot fail to be struck by verbal echoes of the Didascalia as well as by similarity of topics and their treatment and relative importance, though this does not appear among the sources in Abbot Butler's edition of the Rule. So here (substituting

Five degrees or orders are mentioned as belonging to the clerical state: bishop, priest, deacon (deaconess), lector, widow. In church the laity, too, have their groups, here according to sex and age, no other distinction being made. The older sit in front and the younger behind them, these standing if there are not seats enough; they must always give way to an elder or a stranger.

Very little is said of the priest and his duties. He sits, however, with the bishop as forming the "corona" of the church, at the Eucharistic celebration and in judicial cases; no other duty is mentioned. It is the deacon who is most closely associated with the bishop. He is "his mouth, his heart and his soul" and the regular intermediary between him and the faithful. As Aaron is to Moses, so is the deacon to the bishop. One of his special duties is the care of the sick, on behalf of whom he receives gifts and performs personally for them the lowliest and most menial tasks. (The deaconess has care of the women, assisting also at their anointing in baptism and responsible for their further education and training.) At the celebration of the Eucharist one deacon stands at the door (there is no mention of any other doorkeeper), observing those who enter, questioning strangers, especially concerning their orthodoxy, and assigning them to their proper place in the assembly. Another deacon stands by the offertory gifts intended for the celebration.

Subdeacons are apparently unknown. The one mention of them is almost certainly a later interpolation, since they are not mentioned elsewhere in contexts where they could hardly be omitted.

The fact that the sacred scripture is ordered to be read by a lector "if one is available", otherwise by the bishop, suggests that this may not yet have been here a regular order or clerical degree. Elsewhere, a regular lector appears from the second century on, frequently, in the West, a boy, in the hope that the age of innocence would interpose less obstacle between the Word and its effect on the hearers.¹

abbot for bishop), the reception of strangers, visiting clergy, avoidance of idleness, eating and drinking, treatment of children of the community, respect to elders, excommunication for offences, basis of community life—(church) assembly, work, reading.

¹ Cf. Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia*, vol. i, p. 506.

The widows constitute a considerable problem in the community, and it is clear that they are a continual thorn in the side of the bishop. Our author does not disguise his lack of sympathy for them. We are concerned here with those chosen for the ecclesiastical "order" of widow. These are required to be at least fifty years old; a promise not to contract a second marriage is necessary, and it has been found that at this age they are more likely to keep their promise. It seems that these women had gradually acquired a prestige and authority that set them beyond the control of the bishop and even at rivalry with him. They made missionary excursions on their own initiative, causing scandal by their ill-informed exposition of the Church's teaching. They baptized, visited the sick, consorted with and consoled sinners expelled from the Church, so hardening them in their obstinacy, and even affecting to absolve them. They usurped the bishop's prerogative by setting themselves up as teachers to be consulted by the community. All this had to stop. Regarding baptism, for instance, "if it were allowed to be baptized by a woman, then would our Lord and Master have been baptized by his mother, Mary". It is necessary that they become again an integral part of the body, working in subjection to the head and fulfilling their proper function in the community. As the recipients of the gifts of the community they are "the altars of God". Their true vocation is intercessory prayer for their benefactors and for the whole Church; they must give themselves to prayer and put an end to this restless running about.

We have thus the spectacle of a community, a parish, that is one integral whole, one body under a head fulfilling the various functions through the appropriate members. Their communion in the Eucharistic sacrifice, where reception of the Holy Eucharist by all was still a regular part of assistance at it, was the source, pattern and measure of their communion in everything else. The voluntary communism of the first Christians had passed, but gifts from the more prosperous for the needs of the poorer were a regular feature. Even the poor must contribute something; they should, for instance, fast for a day in order to devote the money thus saved to lighten the last hours of a martyr or to "buy out" one imprisoned for his faith. The rich

were expected to place all their goods at the disposal of the bishop, if there were a chance of redeeming one condemned to death for religion. The impression given is that there was a great readiness to do this.

There were, naturally, those who failed to attain to the ideal. Some took advantage of the generosity of others to avoid working for a living; it was not unknown for some to obtain alms by fraud. It was possible for some of the widows to amass from alms received a credit balance from which they issued loans at interest.

Again it is illustrative of this strong family, community, sense that "Brother", the common mode of address, was still more than a merely conventional style. Disputants in a judicial case were forbidden to use it until the dispute was settled. Such disputes might not be brought before a civil court, but, if settlement by mutual agreement, aided by private visits and inducement by the bishop, proved impossible, should be brought before the bishop sitting with his clergy (among whom were not included the widows). Such cases were always heard on a Monday, so that the loser might thus have a whole week to recover; if he appeared at the next Sunday assembly, communicating with the opposing party, then it might reasonably be assumed that a permanent peace had been established.

So, too, before the beginning of the Eucharistic sacrifice, after the dismissal of the catechumens and penitents, the deacon was to call out: "Is there anyone present with anything against his neighbour?" Should the answer be in the affirmative, the speaker must come forward and be reconciled by the bishop before the sacrifice could continue.

There is not space here to speak of the form of their liturgical worship, which was the source and pattern of their unity. It resembled very closely the form of service at Rome as described by Justin (*d.* 165). There is no description of the church, but what is said recalls the general lines of the Roman basilica, the bishop sitting at the east end with his clergy on either side, with the altar between him and the people. One interesting point gleaned from an exhortation made to the widows is that even at this date the altar seems to have been immovable. The author is reproving them for their gadding about, and recalls

that they are the "altars of God" receiving the offerings of the faithful, adding: "The altar of God never goes gadding about and changing its position, but is fixed firmly in one place."

One indication of the objectivity with which they regarded their unity and communion in one body animated by one Spirit, is given by the author's interpretation of the "unforgivable sin". It is clearly the author's opinion, in advance of many sections of the Church at that period, that there is no limit to the number of times a sinner may be received back, and no sin that may not be forgiven. He seems, however, to make an exception of the "sin against the Holy Ghost", and this is made to include even speaking against the Church in which the Holy Ghost is present. So conscious were they of being the people of God, the Body of Christ, living literally by the Spirit.

Now it is obvious that such a monolithic solidarity was a source of immense strength, yet it did restrict their outlook and it is difficult to see, given the circumstances of their origin, how they could have avoided this. They were living in the middle of a decadent pagan culture with an outlook and way of life the very antithesis of their own. Constant watchfulness was required to avoid being drawn back into this life. It was above all necessary to stress the spiritual, the otherworldly character of their religion against those to whom the material world with the immediate pleasures of the senses was the greatest or the only reality, to oppose a strong asceticism to the prevalent laxity of morals and, in the confession of one God, to refuse a whole complex of folklore and social customs deriving from a belief in a vague plurality of deities. They were also liable to fierce and ruthless outbursts of persecution, so that it is not surprising that, like our own ancestors of penal days, they should prefer to pass unnoticed, or, like Plato's philosopher, shelter in the lee of the wall until the storm had passed. Moreover the thought of the second coming of Christ was always with them, not indeed as immediately imminent—the great apostasy was to precede it—but as likely to occur soon. Why trouble with a world that at any moment, probably within their own lifetime, might be suddenly dissolved in flames?

Yet their attitude to the world outside was not primarily decided by such considerations; it had deeper causes. For them

death to sin and rising with Christ to a new life meant a complete and utter break with all that had gone before. They were the company of the elect, isolated, cut off as completely as possible from a wicked world doomed to everlasting fire. Exclusion from the Church was exclusion from the Kingdom of Heaven; outside the visible body of the Church there was no salvation. Inside was already the dawn of the everlasting day; outside was the night and the works of darkness, and, by association at least, the manifold human interests and activities of those outside were condemned along with them. The conversation of our community was in heaven, and this world and all its works could be left to others. The sheep were already separated from the goats, plain for all to see; it remained only for this separation to be made permanent and irrevocable with the Second Coming. For this reason the others are simply called—the phrase is used as with almost a mystical significance—The Left.

Thus a line was drawn and a great gulf fixed cutting off as completely as possible all those not qualified to communicate with them in the Eucharistic celebration. Should an open sinner, for example, who had refused to submit to penance, enter the church, he was, after a final public rebuke by the bishop, escorted to the door by the deacon. His reception back, should this occur, was not less solemn than his first reception through baptism. In the meantime he is excluded from all intercourse with the community. It is one of the most urgent complaints made against the widows that by visiting such people they tended to lighten this excommunication and so delay their repentance.

Accordingly their attitude to the heathen was uncompromisingly simple: they were of The Left. They were "unclean, abominable and despicable heathen", their gods "dumb stone fastened to the wall", in which were honoured "unclean, wicked and cruel devils". Their ritual is "a laughable business", their ceremonies "lying practices", their priests "unclean"—it is a stock epithet. We are equally removed from Paul, discussing on the Areopagus the nature of the Unknown God, with quotations from the pagan poets, and from Gregory with his instructions to Augustine to "christen" the religious beliefs of the

English, so that to this day the most solemn feast of the Christian year is called by the name of a pagan deity, the Feast of Eastre.

Every effort must be made to avoid contamination. Christians must not frequent the theatre; plays will deal with heathen legends and be associated with pagan festivals. They must not swear by the gods nor sing songs of heathen composition; such might contain the names of gods. They may read no book but the Bible; other books will be heathen compositions. Do they desire history, philosophy, adventures, poetry, oratory, here they will find it all. What need of any other book?¹ Their children must not be allowed to play with heathen children; they might be contaminated with their sins. Gifts may not be accepted from a public sinner or from other "evil men", for "it is better to die of hunger than to take gifts from evil men". The list of these last is impressive. It includes artists, "those who paint in colour", "workers in gold and silver",² "thievish tax-gatherers", soldiers "of infamous life". If circumstances should make it impossible to refuse a gift from such, it must be used by the bishop for the least worthy purpose, such as the purchase of fuel for burning for himself or the widows.

One is given the impression that converts are suspect; they are received cautiously. It is laid down that, if a heathen come and say he believes, he shall be taken into the community "in case he really have the desire of conversion". This did not mean, however, that he was admitted to social intercourse with the community; like the public sinners he remained still excluded from it. Such prospective converts were admitted together with the penitents into the Christian assembly in a narthex or ante-room until the beginning of the Eucharistic sacrifice, "so that they may hear the Word; but we do not consort with them until they have received the seal and are perfect".

Such a total exclusiveness was, of course, not always possible in practice, since Christian and heathen might be found in the same family, and it is considered as possible that even the bishop's wife may not be of the faith: still this was the aim.

Needless to say, this essentially negative attitude to the

¹ Here the author is a little inconsistent, since he requires the bishop to be well read; if that is not possible, that he should at least have a good knowledge of sacred scripture.

² They might have made images of the gods; similarly the artists, perhaps.

world outside their own small closed community (and even work, be it noted, is spoken of only in a negative way, as a means of avoiding idleness) was not inherent in their religion. We have noted the very different approach of Paul and Gregory, for instance, to heathen religion and pagan culture in general. Justin the Martyr, still closer in time to our community of the Didascalia, had already elaborated his theory of the *logos spermatikos* through which the pagans too had received a revelation of himself from God, though less complete than that made to the Jews, so that their religious beliefs might serve as an introduction to the true faith and Christ could even be called the fulfilment of Socrates.¹ Similarly of their attitude to the external material world of the senses. The essentially sacramental nature of their religion, by which spiritual realities were expressed and communicated in material form, provided for them the key to the proper understanding and full appreciation of the natural world. That there was such a general understanding and appreciation in spite of these occasional tactical withdrawals is evident from the hymns of the following century, *Salve Festa Dies*, for instance, breathing the very spirit of youth and spring in a world wholly renewed, or *Aeternae Rerum Conditor* with the humble domestic cock as the symbol and herald of a world awakened from darkness to light, storm to tranquillity, sickness to health, sin to grace. This is the voice of the authentic tradition, and gradually it prevailed.

In what degree this community was typical of the period we can only conjecture, but considering its liberal approach to such questions as fasting, penitents, marriage, it is reasonable to suppose that it was less rather than more exclusive than similar communities elsewhere.

The picture that emerges from a study of this document is thus one that is vaguely familiar in many ways, arousing repeatedly the sensation that we have been here before, that it is contemporary. It is contemporary, yet there are differences; and it is just these differences that are important because they represent a development, the fruit of seventeen hundred years of growth and experience, that is providing that more fully "catholic-minded religion", uniting the whole human race in

¹ Cf. Philip Hughes, *A History of the Church*, vol. i, p. 103.

one family, that Dr Toynbee is seeking. It is not possible in the space available to follow up all the lines of thought suggested by a study of this document. It must suffice to indicate a few of the more important, rather as points for meditation than as fully developed arguments with the qualifications and explanation one would wish.

1. *The Rise of the New Christian Community centred round the Church's Liturgical Worship.*

The apparent contraction of the world due to modern methods of travel and communication is tending to draw men closer, into a common brotherhood, of which the Mystical Body is the true pattern and Communism, in its nobler aspirations, a distortion. Our wider, more catholic view of human affairs and the working of Grace, the growing realization that the economic, social and political problems of each country are the affairs of the whole world, the tendency to regard non-Catholic religions as preparatory, foreshadowing and finding their completion in the true Faith, rather than as antagonistic to it—all this, and much more, is roughly parallel to the situation facing such communities as that of the Didascalia when, with the conversion of Constantine, they found their wall of division taken away and themselves part of that larger world of which they were destined to be the leaven. Their enforced isolation favoured the growth of that extraordinarily strong community sense we have noted, with the formation of a way of life in which, potentially at least, there was a complete harmony between natural and supernatural and what today we would call religion and science. It was the increase of such communities and their expansion into self-contained units that was to build up the Christian civilization of the new era. Further, the essential elements of this life in its ideal form were to be fully developed and standardized in a form capable of being transmitted to posterity irrespective of race, colour or climate. Religion was to be presented to the new world as a whole way of life, not just as one department of it.

It had long been evident that in this community that was ideally a community of the perfect many were not only far from perfect but also far from any effective desire for perfection.

In the course of the following century the effect of the great influx of new converts not tried in the school of adversity was inevitably to lower the standard still further; there were to be more Christians but less Christianity, and their strong community sense was to be considerably weakened.

The ideally perfect community, to which all others were to approximate more or less, was to be continued in the Church in the monastic community, with its origins in the flight to the desert of Paul the Hermit about the time of the composition of this document, and fully developed, in the West, in the Rule of St Benedict. The Christian village and town community that developed in the course of the Dark Ages was simply a looser, less exclusive, and therefore less perfect form of this ideal community, mirroring it in a greater or less degree and often growing up in its orbit and even in the shadow of its enclosure wall. This monastic community was thus, in its normal form, self-contained, a microcosm, an abiding pattern for the larger world, an image, as well as might be, of the City of God come to earth. Above all, it was, as was its predecessor, the original Christian community, representative of the Church as a whole, not just a community of clerics but a lay community in the sense that most of its members were laymen. To preserve the elements of this life in their proper proportion there was necessary an even greater degree of isolation, no longer to keep the world out, but rather to enclose a perfect world with all its elements co-ordinated to the direct praise and worship of God. For this purpose it was necessary to be free from commitments to the larger world, have the elements of life at its own disposal.

As the Western world became Christian, largely through the influence of these self-contained cells of the perfect Christian life, and towns and villages came nearer to the ideal of the perfect Christian community, so the monastic community itself tended to lose its cohesion, to change its specific form, principally through the abandonment of manual work and its change from a lay community to a clerical order, and to be absorbed back into the larger world, becoming an integral part of the social structure and performing regular tasks within it. They were the religious, the clerical section of society, distinct from

the lay, the secular, rather than society itself in a microcosm: unfortunately they also tended to become the landowning, wealthy, capitalist class, a class apart from their poor neighbour, the ordinary layman to whom they owed their origins.

A mark of our own time is a new tendency to community, to the formation of small communities within the one great community of nations in the Mystical Body, with God all in all, and each, in varying degrees of perfection, mirroring the whole.¹ It is perhaps reasonable to see this as a necessary complement to the apparent shrinkage of the world with its consequent increase in centralization and regimentation, a healthy diversity in unity which may in part explain our growing nationalist movements and in part the requests for a vernacular liturgy. Especially we see in all directions attempts to re-establish the *perfect* Christian lay community. In some few cases this is coming from within the monastic order as the form of its latest revival, but in general it is coming, as did the monastic order itself, from the laity, in the form of family groups, secular institutes and parishes organized consciously and deliberately as perfect, self-contained communities. It is these that are destined to be the leaven of the society of the future.

2. *All Christians are called to the highest perfection.*

It is clear from this document that all Christians are considered as called to the highest degree of perfection, and that no state of life and nothing in this world need be a hindrance. The logical conclusion to seeking God is finding Him, "seeing" Him, contemplation, that is, or union, union with God, and in God with all persons and things besides at the deepest and only completely satisfying level. All Christians, of whatever state of life, are tending to contemplation in proportion as they are truly seeking God: it is a matter of degree.

The new realization of this truth in recent times has led some modern religious societies, which according to the conventional view are more active than the "active" congregations, to

¹ This new sense of community of the People of God in the Mystical Body, of the parish as a microcosm, and the recapitulation of all things in Christ may perhaps underlie the suggestion made last spring at Spode House by Donovan Purcell, the well-known Norwich architect, that we should return to the circular (or octagonal) in church architecture.

describe themselves, and to be described, as "contemplative". So, for instance, some secular institutes and the Little Brothers of Jesus (the followers of Charles de Foucauld). Yet they do come within St Thomas's definition of contemplative,¹ since the whole aim of their lives is contemplation, while some of the older "contemplative" orders have become assimilated, according to the same definition,² rather to the "active" congregations in devoting themselves directly to works of charity such as teaching and parochial work. In these most modern manifestations of the primitive tradition missionary activity and works of mercy are not the aim; rather the "presence", the presence of the contemplative, is expected to exercise a missionary function. It is an expression of what has recently been suggested as the contribution of Theresa of Lisieux to theology, the doctrine that contemplation is of itself active.

3. *Seclusion not of the essence of the perfect Christian life.*

Granted the fact of the ideal Christian community, of its necessity as a norm and of the unique effect of the Church's full liturgical worship within this environment, still the withdrawal from the world and seclusion of these early communities was accidental; it was not of the essence. Their seclusion was forced on the community of the Didascalia. The monastic community that succeeded it chose a voluntary seclusion as a means to an end, as necessary in order to be free to arrange all the elements of life in one common service and worship of God, the individual finding himself in the course of this complete self-devotion. It is in this sense that they were, in the modern phrase (unknown to them), purely contemplative. Yet this pattern of the Christian life and its line of progress remains the same for all, in whatever degree of perfection it may be worked out.

What is normally essential is a measure of solitude and silence, but given the good will this may often be secured more effectively by the layman who is prepared to organize his day, and especially his leisure, than by all but the most "contemplative" religious in their present development, and even of these

¹ *Summa Th.*, 2.2, 81, 1 ad 5.

² *Op. cit.*, 2.2, 181, 1 ad 3 and 4 o.

latter many are so involved in devotions additional to the central Mass and Office that insufficient time is left for reading and reflexion.

What is certainly of the essence is complete and utter renunciation of all things for the love of God, even, if necessary, to "the games, wild animals or the mines". "Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth cannot be my disciple" was addressed to all. It is the mystic death of baptism, repeated with full consciousness and deliberation in monastic profession with its pall and funeral candles, extended over the whole of life. This does not, however, except in the most rare, exceptional cases, involve a physical flight from this world such as that of the desert hermit or the mediaeval anchorite. It is normally a gradual, lifelong process, tempered by God to the strength of the individual, effected by the apparently casual events of life, by which he passes through and beyond material things while still maintaining physical contact with them. It is thus usually accompanied by an increasing consciousness of possessing things from within, in an ageless and timeless existence, at that point where their being begins.

The "otherworldliness" of Christians is thus not only not incompatible with a full use of the things of this world—our spiritual development does not take place in a vacuum; on the contrary it involves rather the fullest possible use of them, but *tamquam non utentes*, penetrating beyond them, so that, losing them, we find them in a form in which they may be retained for eternity. Thus in the monastic order it was the Benedictine tradition that prevailed, as incorporating the true Christian tradition with its insistence on the value of manual work and its vision that included the whole world as seen under one beam of the sun, rising above it and so able to possess it all—this rather than the contemporary *Regula Magistri* with its disdain of work and of concern for the things of this world.

4. *The distinctive mark of the primitive Christian and monastic communities: Life as a community centred round and taking its inspiration from the Church's Liturgy.*

What, therefore, was distinctive of our Didascalia community as an ideal, and of its successor the monastic community

as a practical proposition, was not the renunciation of the sensible, material world: the exhortation to leave all things is addressed to all. Nor was it contemplation as the end of life: all Christians tend to this in proportion as they are Christian. Its distinctive character consisted in this that it was a closed community cut off sufficiently from the larger world to retain its integrity as a community and establish a norm for all other communities. Thus it made no conscious contribution to the work of the larger world, but was rather itself an ideal world in which every detail of life was a visible part of one service of God. So in the Benedictine rule the most elaborate precautions were taken that nothing should upset the balance of life within the community or entangle it in interests and responsibilities for the world outside, so distracting from the true centre of all men where, through the liturgy of this world, they were initiated into the eternal liturgy of heaven. This was the aim, but in fact, in proportion to the completeness of their concentration on the one thing necessary, there was an inevitable overflow of activity beyond the community, rare authentic instances of St Thomas's activity *per modum additionis*.¹

5. *Has there yet been a Christian education?*

There has never yet been a Christian education as distinct from a humanist, realist, naturalist, scientific education and the rest, with religion added to it. The nearest approach to a truly Christian education was made in the monasteries of the Dark and early Middle Ages, here necessarily restricted to a small number of possible candidates for the monastic, and by this time clerical, state. It was an education that flowed naturally from an active, increasing part in the life of a self-contained community, its starting-point and end active participation in the Church's liturgy. In fact it fulfilled perfectly the requirements of *The Times Educational Supplement* in a leader of a few years ago (4 November 1949) that "Christians must regard the schools not as a piece of mechanism for the dissemination of useful information, or even as a society of individuals brought together with the object of improving their several characters, but as a *body dedicated ultimately and in all its activities to worship*".

¹ *Summa Th.*, 2.2, 182, 1 ad 3 (cf. also 2.2, 188, 6 c.).

(In other words, what St Thomas would have called a purely contemplative community.)

The rediscovery and fuller understanding and appreciation of the Church's liturgical worship has now developed sufficiently to make it again the centre and source of a truly Christian education, while modern theories of physical science have provided a new instrument for illustrating the harmony between matter and spirit.

6. *Shortage of vocations to the religious orders balanced by increased lay activity?*

It is useful to consider how far the present shortage of vocations to the religious orders may be balanced by increase in lay activity in the service of religion. (The shortage of parochial clergy is a separate problem, since their essential functions cannot be supplied by any other body.) Certainly one meets an increasing number of laymen whose whole lives are consciously devoted to God and the things of the spirit to a degree exceeding that of many religious. Equally certain is it that the basis of the coming age must be the Christian community, the cell of Christian life, and that this cell will, of its very nature, consist largely of laymen.

It is such communities that we now see in process of formation, see most clearly where they crystallize out into those lay movements, such as family groups, some of the secular institutes and the most recent offshoots of the monastic order, that aim simply at the perfection of the Christian life with full active participation in the Church's liturgical life as its centre, "purely contemplative" in the sense of devoting a whole life solely to seeking God without "active" work for the good of souls. They all have this in common, that they aim not at *doing* anything, fulfilling one of those special functions within the larger economy that are already provided for, but with *living* in a certain way, in creating a way of life "dedicated ultimately in all its activities to worship".

Oddly enough, until quite recently no religious order or congregation in modern times has offered to the ordinary layman simply this: a life of work, feast and prayer (in which is included that quiet reading that leads to prayer) as a full

member of a religious community, all centred round active participation in the Church's full liturgical worship and leading logically to it. Such a conception had almost disappeared from the Church. Yet this was the aim of the primitive Christian community and of the early monastic community that succeeded to it, and incidentally, by accident one might say, they converted the world.

DOM DENYS RUTLEDGE

THE SCHOOL AND THE PARISH: A COMMENT

THE interesting article in the October number of THE CLERGY REVIEW, by His Lordship the Bishop of Brentwood¹, is evidently written in the hope that others may express their views; as witness the modesty of manner in his saying that some of his suggestions may be far-fetched, and that now is the time for constructive suggestions. Since it is some thirty years since I first wrote about what seemed to me the efficacious way of saving the faith of adolescents, I should like, for what it is worth, to make my contribution to the subject of the parish and the school.

Let me go back then to the early nineteen-twenties. It was then that I undertook a work for boys and girls which I called the Adolescent Oratory. As soon as they left school at the age of fourteen they met me once a week in church, where I spoke to them, and they spoke to me. These talks were devotional. They were also doctrinal in the sense that all devotion rests on fact, on doctrine; but only in that sense. Then, they were sympathetic. It would take too much space here fully to explain this point of sympathy. Briefly, it was a manner of handling the young so that they safely crossed the crisis of adolescence. That crisis is a transition from dependence to spontaneity. This transition has its civic and its sacred aspect. The civic side did not directly concern me in any way. What concerned me was a religious transition from dependence to spontaneity, so that

¹ Now Bishop of Salford [Error].

when they were about seventeen or eighteen years of age they found themselves spontaneous in the practice of their religion. I have no space to develop all this here, and have often written of it elsewhere.

About two-thirds of the young leaving school at fourteen attended these classes quite eagerly. Of the rest, some came with a bit of encouragement, and the remainder could only be had by constant visits to their homes; half-a-dozen times or more if need be. Even then, there were always some whose attendance was most irregular. But I can say that scarcely any ever missed receiving the Sacraments for the third Sunday of Lent, and coming to the church the same evening for a service of their own with a special sermon. It was a great and a gay day in the parish, called the Adolescents' Sunday.

If I may digress here for a moment, I would refer to visiting the homes of lapsed Catholics. In the very great majority of these homes the lapse is not due to malice but to weakness. It has come through the same cause of adverse environment as will make many who are now adolescent lapse in later life if something is not done for them. Since there is so little malice, it is important that the visit of the priest to these homes should be both compassionate and pleasant. The repeated visits needed to get some of the adolescents, those who most required one's help, to the weekly classes would not have been successful unless the priest were already a most welcome caller.

Many of these boys and girls, with my permission and even with my encouragement, joined non-Catholic Scouts, Guides, and all manner of clubs, and proved good little apostles in these environments. More than once those in charge of these non-Catholic activities (usually good types of people) have spoken in terms of high praise of their young Catholic members, and expressed surprise at the courage and the clarity with which they spoke about religion whenever the subject happened to arise. This ability was largely due to the fact that our weekly classes began not with my speaking, but with their first telling me things they had heard said about religion throughout the previous week.

One may be surprised that I ran no clubs myself. It was not that I have anything against them when they are regarded as

the useful though not the necessary thing. But it is a disaster to overrate their importance. And that has happened. I find today that while there are many obstacles to doing this spiritual work I speak of for the young, the greatest of all obstacles, and one nigh impossible to overcome, is the exaggerated importance which the Catholic body itself has given to these clubs, youth movements, and so forth. It is now the hardest of hard things to get Catholic parents, or young people themselves, to believe you can do something for them without these secular asides. Yet it is now and ever true that only the love of God which is in Christ Jesus can ultimately win the life-long allegiance of a human soul. And how eagerly young people will listen if only someone will speak to them of it! The work I was interested in differed from these clubs or youth movements in these three ways: it was directly spiritual and not just spiritual in its ultimate purpose; it was not in any way imitative of activities non-Catholic in origin; and, apart from two outings in the year, it had no material or financial side.

Whenever I had the right people to help (the wrong people do irreparable damage) we used to have classes for boys and girls after the meeting in church, at which they learned to use their hands for sundry civilized accomplishments. What most surprised occasional visitors to these classes was the manners of these young folk. When one first takes them over at fourteen some of them are a bit primitive indeed, and one has to put the first things first. Until they learn manners they can learn nothing; for when they have no understanding of what is due to others they really cannot grasp the idea of what is due to God. One did not, of course, reproach them for bad manners (given their circumstances, that were in itself unmannerly). But one touched on the subject many a time, with copious concrete illustrations. Contrary to what you might expect, they longed to hear one speak of this, and to discover that, no matter what your station, an unbought grace of life is within the reach of all and the exclusive property of none. Apart from the most important aspect of manners as the expression of what is due to God and man, even in the narrowest sense manners are ultimately morals. If you speak to Catholic boys and girls of how to respect themselves and one another, if you speak to them of deportment

and demeanour, you will have an eager audience, especially among the poorest of the poor, who hunger more than others for the grace of life.

Though (need I say?) I never mentioned the subject of impurity to them, I cannot even recall ever speaking about purity; and it must be that I found the indirect approach from the district of manners the best safeguard of all. A certain remoteness in one's remarks is always very well, and is itself good manners; especially when speaking to people who have the Sacrament of Penance in any case.

This work I did as best I could for about twenty years, when circumstances connected with the outbreak of war in 1939 put an end to it. One will want to ask, what effect had it on the "Leakage"? Before answering, let me demur about the word; for "Leakage" is a misnomer. What happens to young folk in our adverse environment is an opposite thing. It is stoppage. The spiritual development of their minds is arrested during adolescence. However, the work I describe had this effect: it stopped, and stopped decisively, the abnormal and needless extent to which this "Leakage" (to use the ghastly word again) usually occurs. These adolescents grew into fervent Catholic men and women, unusually well equipped to discuss their faith with all comers. Among such were several whose parents never practised their religion. Did not some fall away in the end? They did. But what would you? Those who speak of "Stopping the leakage" *tout court* are dealing in unrealities. Given the adverse nature of public life and public opinion around us it would be asking for a sustained miracle on the part of God to check this evil altogether. But we can stop the abnormal and needless extent to which it happens. We can change the face of things.

On the week-days on which these classes were held, a much smaller class was held for boys and girls of fourteen who had never attended a Catholic school or learnt anything about their religion, beyond the fact that they were Catholics. I used to put one of the seniors from the Oratory in charge of them until they were ready for their first Confession. It is always a bit of a mystery to me why some of these hard cases ever came. I think it had something to do with their leaving school, some vague

sense of initiative and self-respect. I shall return to this point in a moment.

All this I have set down because it explains my misgivings when confronted with today's situation of primary and secondary schools. It would be silly to try to have an Adolescent Oratory for children of eleven when they leave the primary school, or even to expect them to come to church one evening a week about six o'clock. Suppose then, though they would be at the secondary school considerably beyond the age, we took them into such an Oratory at fourteen as formerly. I am not sure how far it would work. The Adolescent Oratory succeeded in great measure through the stimulus of circumstance, which affected even fourteen-year-olds who had never been to a Catholic school, as I have said. Part of its process (I cannot be detailed just here) was the creation of initiative and self-respect among the young, and this appealed much to them at a time when school days were left behind, when they were entering upon their life's work. I wonder if this spontaneity could be easily created a year or more later, when they leave a secondary modern school. Some of them, whom the good God never intended for studies but for the robust and indispensable labour of their hands, may be tempted to get a bit sullen during their last year or so at school, and sullenness and spirituality just cannot live together. However, I think this difficulty might be overcome.

It might seem that since we may now have a chapel in our secondary modern schools, our difficulties will be met. Certainly we should be delighted to have these chapels, but they offer no solution of our problem. With great deference, I would advise against moving the centre of Catholic practice from the parish church to the school. I would count it essential to do just the opposite. Such a move would prove very flattering at first. We should have great numbers at Confession, and so on. But if we allowed ourselves to be drawn by this facile appearance of success, I am sure that, in all innocence of course, we should positively discourage and even altogether annul the prospect of developing that spontaneity upon which everything depends.

What then are we to do? His Lordship's suggestion of having a chaplain appointed to the secondary modern school is

attractive. But so much would depend on what we meant by this chaplaincy. For what it may be worth I give my own conception of it here. To begin with, the chaplain should be an able catechist. As St Pius X tells us in his memorable encyclical on the teaching of Christian doctrine, good preachers are easy to find, but good catechists are rare. He must have some measure of the art of prose; that is, the ability so to speak to young people that they just cannot not listen. Nor is that by any means all that goes to make a catechist. The main thing is such an intense love for the souls of the young that his will-power is unbreakable; that he never gives in where people would excuse him for giving in; the sort of will-power wherewith parents battle for their children. He must not only *try* to develop spontaneity in religion in their hearts, but he must *do* it. It is like that, let there be no doubt about it. It is exceedingly hard but utterly rewarding. Nor will his talks with them, however much provocative of interest and thought and smiles, by any means suffice. He must know intimately the character and circumstance of each. Again and again he must have individual talks with this one or that. At the heart of these talks is a humble and affectionate nobility. If the catechist longs enough for them to prove trustworthy, sooner or later the young will develop their own longing to be trusted. It is oneself, one's mind and one's heart, that one gives them. When, as will begin happening after slow and arduous starts, the young would actually be hurt if the catechist cross-questioned them about their monthly Confession, as if he did not trust them, he may know he has succeeded. There are two things that lighten the severe burden here: the radiant cheerfulness that all young people have, and a sort of *readiness* for goodness which, alas, we lose with time.

Again, while his first duty would be the devout and dignified service of the altar in the school, I think the chaplain should otherwise not be seen too much in the school. I say this altogether apart from the fact that the constant appearance of the priest in the class-room is not a help to teachers. The important thing, the thing that serves the maturing of the pupils' minds, is the evidence that the chaplain is not concerned with their schooling but with their lives. Certainly he would be responsible, in co-operation with the diocesan inspectors and the staff,

for arranging the syllabus of religious instruction. But the carrying out of that syllabus is the province of the teachers and not his. His own catechizing is another thing altogether. It is the characteristic act of the priest, the formation of Christ in human souls.

This raises the practical question as to when and where and with whom should his catechizing be done. Would it be best if, while keeping a vigilant eye on religious practice among the younger pupils at the secondary school, he confined his catechetical work to those of fourteen years and over? It might be, though I suppose too clear a line of demarcation might not be wise. Again, should he have a group daily in some room in the school by himself, during the half-hour assigned for religious instruction? I am sure he should not have very big groups at a time; there is no need to catechize anyone more than once a week, and he would have five days each week at his disposal. but half-an-hour would never be enough. Catechizing is a many-sided thing, including listening to the young as well as addressing them, and just that amount of prayer that does not fatigue but sanctifies a situation. Would it be a good thing for the chaplain to have his own house (more expense!) near the school? I am sure he could do a lot more for adolescents if they could see him in a house of his own. On all this I can but write interrogatively; for it would be useless to attempt more concerning something I have not tested; and only experience reveals the difficulties that will arise and the facilities that are afforded. But I do think there would be a sort of eloquence in the existence of a chaplain's house; a nod to all and sundry that the chaplain's interest was not the pupils' schooling but their lives.

Finally, what about visiting the pupils' homes? It was my experience with the Adolescent Oratory that persistent visiting was quite indispensable; very persistent indeed it had to be at times, however compassionate and friendly. With our large secondary modern schools this would mean a great deal of work, spread over a number of parishes. Then, would the parish priests demur, feeling it was no part of a chaplain's duty to visit in their parishes? You never know with parish priests. I say so, being one of them. Of course, the chaplain would studiously

avoid any deliberate apostolate with the parents themselves; his quarry is their children at the school. In any case, many parents are quite priest-proof; it is so long ago since their religious development was arrested, even though they appreciate in a human way the distinction of being visited by the nice gentleman they take the priest to be. On the other hand, the parish priests might regard the chaplain as a public benefactor, and each parish might contribute a quota to his support in a house of his own. I expect anyhow some sort of mutual accommodation could be reached. But I cannot see the chaplain succeeding without a lot of visiting. Nor do I think he would be at all successful unless he continued his catechizing long after the young have left the school. In fact, his best chance then begins.

Let us now take a question raised by His Lordship: might we not spend the huge sums of money we amass to better advantage in other ways? In the first place, I do not see that we have any choice. It seems it must be done. The alternative of ending Catholic school days for the majority of our children at the age of eleven just does not bear considering. Incidentally, and speaking as a priest who is a very mediocre hand at getting in the money and leans heavily on curates, I think parish clergy generally deserve the highest praise for the courageous efficiency with which they have tackled this enormous task. However, there are two comments I would make about this money.

To begin with, the giant task of getting it is fraught with danger to the Church in England as a whole. The danger is that we shall tend to overrate the importance of what S. Gregory the Great calls the *cura pulveris*, and to underrate what he calls the *summa cogitanda*.¹ If that tendency went very far, the Church in England, in its various categories and grades, from top to bottom, would come to be controlled by commonplace opinion. Its gifted members, who have it in them to arrest the ear of the country at its summit of culture and achievement, would go unheard; and nothing short of an outbreak of violent persecution would correct our judgement. Examples of this in the State

¹ *Regula Pastoralis*, p. 2, c. 7: A subditis ergo inferiora gerenda sunt, a rectoribus summa cogitanda, ut scilicet oculum qui praevidendis gressibus praecemet, cura pulveris non obscuret.

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are not hard to find. It is when its very existence is threatened that the right men, hitherto damned with faint praise, come into their own. Yet the Church, unlike the State, is always at war with the world. If today it is the hot war of Communism abroad, it is also the cold war of environment at home. Anyhow, we need not doubt, to continue the metaphor of Gregory, that when the dust gets too much in our eyes, we cannot see what really matters.

My second comment is that getting the money is but a preparatory task. The task itself is the right use of the schools for saving souls; and money does not enter in here. Indeed, it is remarkable to notice the way great spiritual progress has of eluding the company of cash. It would have been very well, in my view, if all that concerns this momentous matter had been settled, and settled in detail, before ever the first Catholic secondary modern school was opened. Nothing is more important in any kind of human endeavour than the right kind of start. However, I suppose the effort made to find the money, and the speed at which things had to go, proved understandably distracting. But just now we should summon all we have of piety and prudence to our aid. In spite of forebodings, and in spite of disconcerting handicaps intrinsic to the 1944 Education Act from our point of view, doubtless these secondary modern schools can be used to wonderful advantage. But everything will depend on the fullness of our conception and the discretion of our method.

“SENESCENS”

THE NEW DECREE ON HOLY WEEK

A SUMMARY

BY the general decree *Maxima Redemptionis Nostrae Mysteria* of 16 November 1955 the Congregation of Sacred Rites has continued the reform of the Sacred Liturgy so auspiciously begun by the decree *Dominicae Resurrectionis Vigiliam* of 9 February 1951, restoring the solemn Easter vigil.

From apostolic times the greatest mysteries of our redemption, the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, were specially recalled and honoured on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday of a week called "Holy Week". Soon the memory of the Blessed Eucharist was celebrated on the Thursday, and finally came a special celebration on the first day of that week—to be called later "Palm Sunday"—of the triumphal entry of the Messianic King into the holy city. For many centuries the chief events of Holy Week were honoured at the hours at which they took place: the Mass *In Coena Domini*, recalling the institution of the Blessed Eucharist was celebrated in the evening of Maundy Thursday; the honouring of the sacred passion on the afternoon of Good Friday, about the traditional hour of our Lord's death; Saturday was an aliturgical day, devoted to the memory of our Lord's burial and the sojourn of His body in the sepulchre, until late in the evening when the great vigil service was begun that terminated the following morning in the joyous celebration of Easter Day.

By degrees, for various reasons, the liturgical functions of the great week began to be anticipated, and at last came to be celebrated on the morning of each day, so that the liturgy of even Easter Day began quite early on the morning of its eve. The result was that many of the ceremonies lost their symbolical meaning, and, in some details, became almost absurd.

During the Middle Ages the chief days of Holy Week were holy days of obligation, but in the seventeenth century the Church was obliged to limit the number of holy days to the greatest festivals of the year, and so in 1642, by decree of Urban VIII, the weekdays of Holy Week ceased to be days of obligation. This meant that people were engaged in ordinary secular occupations on these days, and their attendance at the great functions grew less and less. In the long run only the clergy taking part in the ceremonial and a few devout persons were present. This was for the faithful a grave spiritual loss.

Accordingly, of recent years, liturgists, priests engaged in pastoral work, and especially the bishops, have been petitioning the Holy See to restore the services of Holy Week to their original afternoon hours, that they may recover their full significance, and especially that the people may be able more

easily to take their proper part in them. The present Holy Father—who never turns a deaf ear to any proposal that is calculated to forward the spiritual welfare of his flock—inaugurated the reform of the Order of Holy Week by a most felicitous restoration of the Easter vigil in 1951, to be put into effect, according to the wish of local Ordinaries, for a trial period. This reform having been a great success, the petitions for the restoration of the other rites of Holy Week having continued to increase, and the Apostolic Constitution *Christus Dominus* of 1953 having made it possible to have evening Mass and Communion, the Pope ordered the special Commission that he created some years ago for the reform of the Sacred Liturgy to study the question of the Holy Week liturgy, and propose a suitable reform of the existing rites. When this had been done His Holiness submitted the matter for special examination to the Congregation of S. Rites. This body at an extraordinary session on 19 July last unanimously approved and ordered to be put into effect a new Order for Holy Week, subject to the approval of the Pope. Pius XII gave this approval and, at his special mandate, the Congregation decreed the new Order.

The decree *Maxima* has three parts, with 10 subsections, and is followed—as was the case with the Apostolic Constitution *Christus Dominus*—by a long Instruction (in four parts, with 25 subsections) of S.R.C., dealing with the practical application of the terms of the decree.

(1) Those who follow the Roman rite are bound to follow the new Order as set forth in the typical edition issued by the Vatican Press. This will supersede the Missal for the days of Holy Week. The Order comes into force on the second Sunday of Passiontide,¹ 25 March 1956. During Holy Week no commemoration or *oratio imperata* is allowed.

(2) The rubrics for the private recitation of the Divine Office remain unchanged by the decree, but in the choral celebration Matins and Lauds are not anticipated, but carried out in the morning on the last three days of the week.² Vespers are omitted on the afternoons of Maundy Thursday and Good

¹ This is the new name the decree gives Palm Sunday, to emphasize that it is not the blessing of palms that is the chief element of the liturgy of that day.

² In a cathedral, because of the *Missa Chrismatis* on Maundy Thursday morning, the Matins and Lauds of that day may be anticipated.

Friday (because of the afternoon functions). After the latter Compline is recited on these two days, but is omitted on Holy Saturday (because of the vigil service). On the second Sunday of Passiontide the blessing of and procession with palms takes place at the accustomed hour (in choir after Terce). On Maundy Thursday the Mass *In Coena Domini* is to be celebrated in the evening (between 5 and 8 p.m.).¹ On Good Friday the liturgy of the Passion is to take place in the afternoon, about 3 p.m.² The solemn Easter vigil is to be celebrated at a suitable hour, i.e. at an hour that will allow the solemn Mass to begin about midnight.³

(3) The Lenten fast and abstinence no longer end at midnight on Holy Saturday (*C.7.C.*, canon 1252⁴), but at midnight of that day.

THE INSTRUCTION OF *S.R.C.*

S.R.C. opens the Instruction by recalling that the chief purpose of the new decree is pastoral, that the faithful may "more easily and with greater devotion and profit" take part in the liturgy of Holy Week. Ordinaries are, therefore, to see that priests, especially those with the care of souls, are to be well versed not only in the ceremonial of the new Order, but also in its liturgical and pastoral meaning. The people, too, must be instructed during Lent concerning the new rite, especially about these points:

(a) *Palm Sunday*: the people are to be invited to take part in greater numbers in the solemn procession to give public testimony of their love and gratitude towards Christ-King. They should be warned to go in good time during the week to confession.

(b) *Maundy Thursday*: the faithful should be reminded of the love of Christ in the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, sacrament-sacrifice, and of the duty of adoration of the most holy Sacrament after the evening Mass.

¹ The *Missa Chrmatis* in cathedrals is celebrated in the morning, after Terce.

² Should pastoral reasons so require it may be at a later hour, but not after 6 p.m.

³ For good reasons, with leave of the Ordinary of the place, the hour may be earlier, but not before dusk, and certainly not before sunset.

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(c) *Good Friday*: the meaning of the day's liturgy and especially of the veneration of the cross should be understood by the people, who may now receive Holy Communion on that day, as was formerly the practice for many centuries. They are to be reminded to observe recollection on this most sacred day and not forget the law of fast and abstinence.

(d) *Holy Saturday*: the people are to be instructed about the special character of this aliturgical day, a day of deep mourning on which the Church dwells at the tomb of Christ, meditating on His passion and death, until the vigil service. The liturgy of the vigil is to celebrate especially the fruits of the resurrection of Christ, the light of the world, reaped by us through the sacrament of baptism.

No less important is the ritual preparation for Holy Week, that all taking part in the ceremonies may be properly instructed.

SOME POINTS REGARDING THE RUBRICS

The second part of the Instruction deals with a number of practical points regarding the new Order:

(1) When the rite is carried out in solemn form those parts that are sung or read by the deacon, subdeacon, or reader are not to be repeated by the celebrant.

(2) For Palm Sunday the people may (if it is the custom) bring with them palms or other plants to be blessed, or may have these distributed to them after they have been blessed.

(3) For Maundy Thursday the usual place for the Blessed Sacrament is to be prepared, and suitably adorned with hangings and lights. After the Mass the public adoration of the most holy Sacrament may go on at least until midnight.

(4) Regarding the vigil service: (i) the symbols to be traced on the Paschal candle by the celebrant may be marked out beforehand; (ii) it is becoming that the people should hold their lighted candles during the Preconium and during the renewal of their baptismal promises; (iii) it is proper to adorn the vessel containing the baptismal water to be blessed; (iv) if there are persons to be baptized, the ceremonies that precede the profession of faith may be carried out earlier in the day at some

convenient hour; (v) if there should be an ordination, the final admonition is to be given before the pontifical blessing.

(5) On the vigil of Pentecost, the baptismal water is no longer to be blessed, and Mass begins with the usual prayers of preparation and the Introit provided in the Missal for a private Mass.

MASS AND HOLY COMMUNION ON THE TRIDUUM SACRUM

(1) The very old tradition that there are no private Masses on Maundy Thursday but that all the clergy receive Holy Communion at the Mass *In Coena Domini* is to be maintained. Where pastoral needs demand it, the Ordinary of the place may allow one or two Masses in churches (one only in semi-public oratories) that the people may have Mass and Holy Communion, and these Masses may be celebrated between the hours at which the Mass *In Coena Domini* is permitted.

(2) On Maundy Thursday Holy Communion may be given only at, or immediately after, the evening Masses, on Holy Saturday only within, or immediately after, the vigil Mass, except for the sick and those in danger of death.

(3) On Good Friday Holy Communion may be given only during the afternoon liturgy, except for the sick and dying.

(4) Priests who celebrate the solemn Easter vigil Mass at the proper hour (i.e. after midnight) may again celebrate Mass on Easter Sunday (two or three Masses, if they have the necessary indult).

(5) In regard to the Eucharistic fast the rules of the Apostolic Constitution *Christus Dominus* (1953) are to be observed.

LOCAL DIFFICULTIES

Local Holy Week popular customs, when it is desirable to maintain them, must fit in with the new rites of Holy Week, and the people must be taught that the Liturgy is of far greater worth than any private devotions. The customary blessing of

houses on Holy Saturday should take place at a suitable time before or after Easter.

The ringing of bells at *Gloria in excelsis* at the solemn evening Mass of Maundy Thursday and at Easter vigil Mass is to be done thus: (a) in places where there is one church only, the bells are rung at the beginning of the hymn; (b) in places where there are several churches—in which the ceremonies are carried out at the same hour or at different hours—the bells of all the churches are to be rung with those of the cathedral or of the chief church (if in doubt about which church is the principal one, the Ordinary of the place is to decide).

The decree is signed by the Prefect of S.R.C. (Cardinal Cicognani) and its Secretary, Archbishop Carinci.

J. O'CONNELL

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

EUCCHARISTIC FAST—LATE MASSES

In promulgating the new Eucharistic fasting laws, was it the intention of the Holy Father that people who make a habit of attending a late Mass should communicate at it? Should people be urged to communicate at late Sunday Masses? May a priest give people permission to receive Holy Communion non-fasting after nine o'clock, just at their request, and without first urging them to come to an early Mass? (S.)

REPLY

(i) *Christus Dominus*, 16 January 1953; THE CLERGY REVIEW, 1953, XXXVIII, p. 174: "Haec nos decernentes, fore confidimus ut haud parum conferre possimus ad Eucharisticae pietatis incrementum, atque adeo aptius permovere et excitare omnes ad Angelorum participandam Mensam. . . ."

Concilium Tridentinum, Sess. XXII, cap. 6: "Optaret quidem sacrosancta Synodus ut in singulis Missis fideles adstantes non solum spirituali affectu, sed sacramentali etiam Eucharistiae perceptione communicarent. . . ."¹

The words of the Council of Trent, repeated in the Code of Canon Law,² express the age-old intention of the Church that the faithful who are present at Holy Mass should be urged to communicate sacramentally at that Mass so that they may have a richer share in the fruits of the sacrifice. The practice of not distributing Holy Communion at late Masses was simply the acceptance of the fact that the people did not wish to receive because it was too difficult to remain fasting. It was generally recognized that, if anyone should approach the altar rails, Holy Communion would be readily given to them. Indeed in some places local legislation made a point of reminding the clergy that the opportunity of receiving Communion was to be afforded at *all* Masses.³ *Christus Dominus* is obviously in line with the Church's mind on this matter, and in particular the provisions of the Holy Office Constitution, n. 5, are intended to encourage those people to receive who hitherto would not have received at late Masses on account of the difficulty of observing the fast. But it is no part of the Holy Father's intention to encourage people deliberately to choose a late Mass solely for the sake of availing themselves of the relaxations. "Only those who are in necessity may avail themselves of these concessions, according to the measure of their necessity."⁴

(ii) Since the real difficulty lies in the third question, it will be better to deal with it before answering the second. The problem is whether persons, who, absolutely speaking, could go to an earlier Mass and observe the fast, can choose to go to a later Mass and avail themselves of the dispensation. The commentators agree that a person who chooses a late Mass *merely* for his own comfort cannot be permitted to go non-fasting to Communion on the grounds of the lateness of the hour. "Fideli qui absque gravi incommodo Sacram Communionem ante horam tardiorum sumere possit, non licet dispensatione uti nec

¹ *Denz. Enchir. Symb.*, 944.

² Canon 863.

³ E.g. Liverpool Synod, XXIII, 126.

⁴ *Christus Dominus*, THE CLERGY REVIEW, 1953, XXXVIII, p. 171.

horam eligere tardiorē unice ob majorem commoditatem."¹ There is a private instruction of the Holy Office printed in the *Palestra del Clero* to bear out this view.² The conclusion drawn from this is that to choose a late Mass, and thereby avail himself of the dispensation, a person must, as the writers variously put it, "have some necessity", or "a reasonable cause", or "be unable to go to an earlier Mass without real difficulty".³ The examples usually given of those who have a reasonable cause are those who have to remain at home while others go to Mass, those who wish to go to a later Mass by reason of some solemnity, an altar server appointed for a late Mass, those who, having to rise early during the week, reasonably want a longer rest on Sunday.⁴

It might therefore be concluded, not without reason, that those who go to the late Masses on Sunday out of habit have not a sufficient reason for so doing and should therefore be told to go to an earlier Mass and observe the fast. We consider that such a conclusion would be too severe. For the Holy Father himself mentions as a motive for relaxing the fast the changes in social habits which create certain difficulties. It is true that the examples given by the Holy Father are the insufficiency of priests, the fact that there may be no early Mass to go to, the condition of workers, mothers, school children who may need nourishment; but at least one commentator of repute⁵ notes that the social changes envisaged include the general modern tendency to retire later at night and to rise later in the morning. We cannot lightly dismiss the motive of this tendency as mere laziness or a desire solely for more comfort, especially as the Pope himself recognizes the weakening of the general level of robustness.⁶

In the light of this, we consider that where good Catholics have been habitually attending late Masses, a reasonable cause may be presumed. In the past we have not assumed that those who go to the later Masses have been doing so solely for their

¹ Castellano, O.P., *Monitor Ecclesiasticus*, 1954, p. 25.

² XXXII, p. 446.

³ Cf. Ford, *New Eucharistic Legislation*, p. 98; Conway, *New Law on the Eucharistic Fast*, pp. 53 and 55.

⁴ Hurth, *De Nova Disciplina*, p. 40.

⁵ Bride, *L'Ami du Clergé*, 1953, p. 201, footnote 5.

⁶ *Christus Dominus*, *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, *ibid.*, p. 173.

own comfort. We have taken it that they were entitled to the longer rest. Further, if the confessor were always to ask about the reason for going to a later Mass, it would prove burdensome to the petitioner and would very often have the effect of having a good, as distinct from a very good, Catholic go to the late Mass and omit Holy Communion.

To put it briefly, considering the social habits of the day, common estimation would regard the person who went to, say, the nine o'clock or ten o'clock Mass as availing himself of reasonable Sunday rest. If, therefore, the confessor has no reason to suspect that the person is deliberately choosing the later hour in order to take liquid refreshment before Communion, we think he should not probe into the reason why the person is going to the later Mass and should not normally raise the question of going to an earlier Mass.

(iii) In the pulpit the priest would do well to urge all to communicate at whatever Mass they go to and to approach the confessor if they feel real difficulty in observing the fast.¹ He should not, we think, insist from the pulpit that people should attempt to go to an earlier Mass and receive non-fasting, as this is introducing a consideration that the people may find confusing and is likely to have the effect of discouraging people from putting their case to the confessor.²

T. CUMMINS

CHRISTIAN BURIAL

It is painful to have to refuse to bury an unbaptized child of good Catholic parents. Is there anything a priest can do in these circumstances? May a parish priest refuse to give Christian burial to Catholics who marry outside the Church and who only repent on their death-bed? One priest told me he did this to discourage others who may have been contemplating such a

¹ We are aware of (but do not agree with) the opinion, probable in practice, that the late hour itself constitutes a *grave incommodum*. Cf. *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, October 1955, p. 618. The confessor may use this opinion, but it is unwise for the priest to air it in public.

² Cf. P. Ahearne, D.D., *Relaxation of Eucharistic Fast*, issued from Bishop's House, Waterford, p. 16.

marriage. What of a person who has lived always as a Catholic but who is discovered after death never to have been baptized? (B. W.)

REPLY

Canon 1239, s. 1: *Ad sepulturam ecclesiasticam non sunt admittendi qui sine baptismo decesserint.*

s. 3: *Omnes baptizati sepultura ecclesiastica donandi sunt, nisi eadem a jure expresse priventur.*

(i) The refusal of Christian burial to the unbaptized child of Catholic parents creates one of those unpleasant situations with which priests, in carrying out the law of the Church, so often find themselves confronted. It is all the more difficult because, since there is no moral fault, the faithful do not easily understand why the child cannot be interred in the family grave. Nevertheless in a clear case the priest has no alternative but to refuse. He should do so, of course, in a sympathetic way, explaining that there is no question of punishment but simply that the child has no title to Christian burial, since it is not a member of the Church. Where there is any doubt, where the child has been doubtfully baptized, or conditionally baptized after apparent death, it can—and indeed must¹—be given ecclesiastical burial. Many commentators, too, admit the lawfulness of a growing custom of burying an unbaptized child along with its dead mother, even when the child has died after birth.² But even when refusal is imperative, there is much that a priest may do to avoid causing hard feelings. The law prohibits ecclesiastical burial as defined in canon 1204. Neither the canon law nor any danger of scandal forbids the priest to go to the house and say prayers over the corpse. The prayers need not be, as is usually suggested, merely for the parents that they may be truly resigned, but may be prayers that God in His infinite mercy may see fit to take the child to Himself.³ Such prayers do not conflict with the traditional theology concerning the fate of unbaptized infants, for this allows the possibility of extraordinary

¹ Vermeersch-Creusen, *Epitome*, II, n. 547.

² Jorio, *Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 521, 2, cf. *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, 1940, XVIII, p. 545.

³ A. Bride, *L'Ami du Clergé*, 1952, p. 63.

dispositions of God's providence. Also, unless there is any local law against it, the priest may accompany the funeral to the graveside in unconsecrated ground and there also may say prayers (e.g. Pater, decade of Rosary). If the priest should go to the grave, it would seem prudent that he be "in nigris" to offset any impression that ecclesiastical burial is being given.

(ii) The priest who refuses to bury repentant public sinners is acting unlawfully. Canon 1239, s. 3, is emphatic. It is the right of all baptized persons to have ecclesiastical burial unless there is an *express* prohibition. Those who are to be deprived of it are listed *taxative* in canon 1240, with the proviso "*nisi ante mortem aliqua dederint poenitentiae signa*". The law is penal and must be interpreted strictly. In other words the widest meaning must be given to "*aliqua poenitentiae signa*". If even one reliable person can testify that there has been a sign of repentance, such as the kissing of a crucifix, the invocation of a saint, Christian burial should not be refused.¹ The priest cannot refuse, even for the best of reasons, a right that the law of the Church grants.

(iii) A person who has lived as a Catholic but is in fact unbaptized should be granted ecclesiastical burial on the analogy of the catechumen who dies without baptism.²

T. C.

ATTITUDE TO RELATIVES INVALIDLY MARRIED

May Catholic parents and relatives attend the attempted marriage of a Catholic in a non-Catholic church? May they attend the wedding reception? May they receive the "bridal pair" at home for social visits? (O. A. P.)

REPLY

Our correspondent mentions that he has in mind a priest who allowed the parents to attend the reception for the sake of

¹ Regatillo, *Institutiones Iuris Canonici*, II, n. 75.

² Ibid., n. 74.

domestic peace. It is true that the answer to the questions posed depends upon the general principles covering co-operation and scandal and that both material co-operation and indirect scandal may be permitted for a proportionately serious reason. It is also true that these questions can in practice only be solved by the priest on the spot, who knows the gravity of the scandal involved and the seriousness of the causes which might excuse. Nevertheless we think that nothing would excuse Catholic parents and relatives being present at the wedding ceremony. It is not the same thing as the attendance of Catholics at the marriage of two non-Catholics. Here it is co-operating at the violation of a serious Church law. Whatever the motive for attending, it would almost certainly be taken both by the parties to the invalid marriage and by the Catholics and non-Catholics of the district as a form of approval of the union. The same would be true of being present at the wedding breakfast.

As for receiving the pair for visits, the case is not so clear. Father Connell, C.S.S.R., the only theologian we know of to treat explicitly of the attitude of parents in a similar situation, makes the following points. Parents should show that their erring children still have their love and sympathy, but they must also show that they are unchanged in their condemnation of their evil conduct. They may receive their own child for visits, but should discourage visits from the pair. They should not invite them for family celebrations. Pastoral prudence may suggest that individuals be left in good faith.¹

Father Connell is writing about Catholics married to divorced persons, a situation in which there is no hope of rectifying the union. We think his rules perhaps a little too strict for the case which we are contemplating. We think that, while parents and relatives should not welcome the parties with open arms, it would be too grave a burden to have to turn them away should they call. There is more chance of bringing the couple to a realization of their duty to rectify the "marriage" if they receive them with kindness and from time to time raise the subject of their wrong-doing. But if the parents themselves wish

¹ *American Ecclesiastical Review*, 1948, cxviii, p. 309.

to take a stricter line, or the clergy of the district, judging from their knowledge of the parties and the locality, hold a severer view, they are entitled to do so.

T. C.

THE TABERNACLE VEIL

In the manuals of Moral Theology it is stated that deliberately to leave the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the tabernacle without a light for, say, a whole day would be a grave sin. The moral theologians usually say nothing about the gravity of reserving the Sacred Species in an unveiled tabernacle. But does not the law requiring the tabernacle to be veiled emanate from the same authority that orders a light and isn't this rubric obligatory also? (Perplexed.)

REPLY

The reservation of the Blessed Sacrament is permitted only under the conditions laid down by the Church. She it is who determines (a) in what churches or oratories there may be reservation (*C.F.C.*, canons 1265, 1267), (b) where within these the Sacred Species are to be kept, i.e. at one altar (canon 1268¹), at the finest and most honourable altar, which is, normally, in ordinary churches, the high altar (canon 1268²), (c) in what way, i.e. in an immovable tabernacle placed in the middle of the altar (canon 1269¹)—a tabernacle which is to be of excellent workmanship and *becomingly adorned in accordance with liturgical law* (canon 1269²). An Instruction of the S. Congregation of the Sacraments (Ascension Day, 1938) repeats all this and gives detailed directions about the construction of the tabernacle, especially in regard to the safety of the Blessed Sacrament. Thus the Church makes due provision for the reservation of the Sacred Species, that these may be safe from all danger of desecration, and may be kept with that degree of honour that the Church considers fitting. This latter is provided for by the correct adornment of the tabernacle (canon 1269²), and the

burning of, at least, one light before the tabernacle (canon 1271).

The liturgical law about the due adornment of the tabernacle to which canon 1269² refers is found in the Roman Ritual (V, i, 6) and decrees 3035¹⁰ and 3150 of the Congregation of S. Rites. The Ritual says the tabernacle is to be "becomingly covered¹ with a conopaeum". The decrees repeat this and refer to the rubric of the Ritual.

This provision for the becoming reservation of the Blessed Sacrament has been widely neglected and many efforts made to find a valid excuse for disregarding it. But *S.R.C.* has insisted that custom does not excuse from its observance (4137), nor the fact that there is "a beautiful silk veil often interwoven with even silver or gold" within the tabernacle (3150), nor yet the fact that the tabernacle itself is "made of silver, or gold or other precious material" (3520). Over and over again *S.R.C.* has demanded that the prescription of the *Ritual* be observed.

The covering of the tabernacle is not a new thing. Once tabernacles became the normal method of reservation and began to be placed permanently on the high altar (the sixteenth century in this country) the veiling of the tabernacle—derived, probably, from the curtain that once hung down over the entire altar, or from the veil that adorned the hanging pyxes containing the Blessed Sacrament—came into use. It was ordered by St Charles Borromeo (+1584) and was then, apparently, not a new usage. The veiling of the tabernacle became a *law* in 1614, when it was prescribed in the rubrics of the first official edition of the Roman Ritual.

The reasons for the rubric are: (i) to protect the tabernacle from dust; (ii) more particularly, as a mark of special honour to the Blessed Sacrament and for mystical reasons (there was a veil before the Holy of Holies both in the Tabernacle and in the Temple in the Old Law; sacred vessels are veiled in public, when not in use, in the Roman rite²).

Rubricians are unanimous in declaring that the conopaeum is absolutely obligatory, and many of them deplore the common

¹ *Opertum* is the word used, and the Index of *S.R.C.* decrees (itself authentic) uses *legendum*.

² The tabernacle is also veiled (in red) in the Ambrosian rite.

violation of this law. Most theologians have been rather coy in their treatment of the question, being content to state the law without comment (perhaps they deem it the business of the rubrician rather than their concern), but some of them have definitely stated their view of the law. "A full compliance with the rubrics requires that the tabernacle should be completely covered with a veil, and not merely have a curtain hanging before the door," wrote the late Canon Mahoney.¹ "On this there is no possible room for doubt." Father F. Cappello wrote: "Solum excusat physica aut moralis impossibilitas habendi aut retinendi hujusmodi ornamentum [the conopaeum], non vero, saltem per se et habitualiter, alia quaevis causa. Hinc corrigendi sunt nonnulli auctores etiam recentes, qui contrarium docent. Obstant enim decreta S. Rituum Congregationis."²

Later Father Cappello discusses whether a contrary custom may be maintained, and gives this as his opinion: "Mature perspiculis liturgicis, ut certam habemus opinionem negantem."

The only *valid* excuse for not veiling the tabernacle recognized by the theologians and rubricians is the impossibility of carrying out the law, because of the size or shape or position of the tabernacle. This may, indeed, be a reasonable excuse in some cases, though in many such the determination to provide for the Blessed Sacrament the honour demanded by the Church has overcome this difficulty by the reconstruction of a wrongly built altar or tabernacle. But what is to be said about the construction of *new* tabernacles in such a way that the law of the Church cannot be observed?

There seems little doubt that the rubric requiring the veiling of the tabernacle when it contains the Blessed Sacrament is as important as that requiring a light before it. It is possible that it may be more so, seeing that the use of the conopaeum is a mark of honour *exclusively reserved* for the Sacred Species (a light or lights may burn before sacred images in a church, and should before relics, if exposed), and is *the only way* of knowing, in a large church, where there may be several tabernacles and many lights burning, where the Blessed Sacrament is actually reserved.

J. B. O'C.

¹ *Questions and Answers*, II, Q. 665.

² *De Sacramentis*, I, n. 381.

ROMAN DOCUMENT

PAPAL MESSAGE TO "PAX ROMANA"

NUNTIUS PII PP. XII

IIIS QUI INTERFUERUNT CONVENTUI XXIII UNIVERSALI A SODALITATE,
QUAE "PAX ROMANA" APPELLATUR, IN URBEM "NOTTINGHAM"
INDICTO (*A.A.S.*, 1955, XLVII, p. 605).

Il Nous est particulièrement agréable de vous adresser ce Message paternel, chers étudiants et intellectuels de Pax Romana, rassemblés à Nottingham pour votre XXIII^e Congrès mondial. Témoins, dans vos pays respectifs, de la vitalité et de la force de la pensée catholique, vous voici réunis en grand nombre sur le sol hospitalier de cette noble nation anglaise, dont la haute culture fut, dès les temps les plus reculés, pénétrée de foi chrétienne; vos travaux s'y poursuivront sous l'égide de Notre cher Fils le Cardinal Bernard Griffin, Archevêque de Westminster, et Nous-même encourageons volontiers votre dessein d'étudier la condition de la jeunesse intellectuelle à l'heure où celle-ci quitte l'Université pour entrer dans la vie professionnelle.

Multiples sont les difficultés de cette période de transition. Celles, en particulier, de l'adaptation du jeune diplômé à la carrière choisie et aux responsabilités culturelles, économiques ou sociales qu'elle comporte, posent à l'Université la question de savoir si l'étudiant d'aujourd'hui est toujours préparé comme il convient à son avenir immédiat. Mais la société, qui le reçoit, a aussi ses propres obligations pour ne pas décevoir l'attente des générations montantes et répondre au contraire à leurs légitimes aspirations dans un climat de saine liberté et de confiance. Sur ces deux points, la contribution de votre Congrès à la cause des élites intellectuelles sera d'autant plus opportune que le développement de la culture en maints pays ouvre des perspectives toutes nouvelles à une jeunesse avide de savoir et de servir.

Que la recherche de solutions d'ordre institutionnel ne fasse toutefois pas perdre de vue l'ampleur du problème moral posé à la conscience du jeune diplômé lors de son départ de l'Université. Les premiers contacts avec le monde du travail vont, en effet, éprouver la solidité de sa formation intellectuelle et humaine: c'est, tout à la fois, l'affrontement aux difficultés de l'existence, la découverte sous un jour nouveau de la question sociale, l'accession à la vie civique et politique, l'accaparement par des tâches professionnelles absorbantes ou, à l'inverse, l'attente inquiète d'une situation; et déjà

l'étudiant d'hier envisage la fondation du foyer et les charges familiales de demain. Qu'en sera-t-il, durant ces années parfois décisives, de sa foi et de sa piété personnelles? Comment évitera-t-il les écueils qui guettent sa vie religieuse et morale?

Dans le désarroi qu'il peut alors connaître, un fils de l'Eglise, loin de se refermer sur lui-même dans un sentiment d'autonomie et d'indépendance propre à cet âge, cherche au contraire dans une communauté fraternelle et fervente le soutien spirituel dont il a besoin pour résister aux entraînements de son nouveau milieu et orienter ses juvéniles énergies. Les mouvements d'Action Catholique ont ici un rôle décisif à jouer. Par leur entremise, comme par celle de paroisses vivantes, c'est l'Eglise, toujours maternelle, qui accueille ces jeunes hommes pressés de faire valoir les talents reçus, de contribuer au bien de leurs frères par un travail productif et d'assumer, dans la famille et la profession, leur juste part de responsabilités. Sa sagesse les guidera vers un authentique service de la Cité, son ministère leur ouvrira les sources inépuisables de la grâce; et, dans sa charité pour le monde qui a faim de Dieu, elle presse ses enfants d'entrer généreusement dans les rangs de l'apostolat, où ils trouveront par surcroît, dans le dévouement à autrui, l'antidote au repliement sur soi-même et la réponse à bien des difficultés.

A Nos chers fils de Pax Romana, à ceux surtout qui, au sortir de l'Université, s'engagent dans une vie nouvelle, Nous adressons Nos vœux les meilleurs pour le succès de ces prochaines assises, et Nous leur accordons de grand cœur, en gage de Notre constante bienveillance, Notre paternelle Bénédiction Apostolique.

Du Vatican, le 30 Juillet 1955.

PIUS PP. XII

BOOK REVIEWS

The Spoil of the Violent. By Emmanuel Mounier. Translated by Katherine Watson. Pp. 85. (The Harvill Press. 6s.)

Back to Reality. By Gustave Thibon. Translated by A. Gordon Smith. Pp. xiv + 152. (Hollis & Carter. 13s. 6d.)

Christianity and Freedom. A Symposium. Pp. xi + 163. (Hollis & Carter. 6s.)

Abbé Pierre and the Ragpickers. By Boris Simon. Translated by Lucie Noel. Pp. 200. (The Harvill Press. 15s.)

THIS welcome translation of another work of the late M. Mounier makes difficult reading. But it is—its French title is *l'Affrontement*

chretien—the necessary complement to his *Petite Peur du XXe siècle*. Just as the latter has the shadow of Marx over every page, so this work is haunted by the shade of Nietzsche. The Marxist critique, that Christianity upheld the privileges of the oppressor by preaching resignation, can be countered with the argument that Marx had never known other than a caricature of true Christianity. But the Nietzschean critique is much more forceful, for it alleges a weakness which is indigenous to Christianity itself. To Mounier this was a challenge, a challenge to call for an heroic Christianity based on the virtue of fortitude. He is far from mealy-mouthed in his denunciation of somnolent Christians, but he wrote as one who had suffered imprisonment at the hands of the puppets of the Nazi supermen. He has no time for poverty of faith or fear of living, and exhorts the virile Christian to face the problems of his age with confidence. This book was written in the winter of 1943-44 at Dieulefit, where Mounier had taken refuge under the name of Leclercq after his release from prison. More or less contemporaneous with it is M. Thibon's *Retour au Réel*, which is now offered to the Anglo-Saxon reader in a very much over-priced translation. One is very conscious of the contrast between these two books as representing the reactions of two French Catholics to the defeat and occupation of their fatherland. The reality to which M. Thibon wishes to return is agriculture and an aristocratic form of society. Conveniently for the propagandists of Marshal Pétain's National Revolution he found the causes of France's decline in industrialism and democracy, and sees the débâcle of 1940 as a just judgement on the "crisis of unrealism which began with the Revolution of 1789". He included in the book of 1943 a critique of the democratic ideal written originally in 1937, and defended it in his preface. After his wordy demolition of strawmen one longs for the objective thinking and the clear distinctions of M. Maritain when writing about the same subject. The truth is that M. Thibon, while making a great play of sticking to the facts (which consists chiefly in quoting statistics from villages around where he lives), is as utopian and unreal as the phantoms he describes. Just one proof of this is the way in which events since 1945 have made nonsense of his prophecies regarding the birth-rate.

For less than half the price of *Back to Reality* the same publishers offer a book which is more than twice its value: *Christianity and Freedom*. It is based on a series of papers read to the *Centre catholique des Intellectuels français* in February and March 1952. (One wonders why the publishers have omitted this useful piece of information from the preface to the English edition.) The first paper is by M. Thibon, but M. Thibon of 1952 is very different from M. Thibon

of 1943, and his discussion of "Christianity and Liberty" is a worthy introduction to the essays that follow, on freedom in Hinduism, Islam, in the Hellenic inheritance and in the Orthodox world. Thus the contrast is made between the true meaning of freedom as developed in Christendom—to which both East and West contributed—and the lack of it in non-Christian civilizations. But this freedom is threatened today, by totalitarianism from the East and by the fear of freedom in the West, and the concluding essays by André Railliet and Daniel-Rops demonstrate the necessary conditions, political, economic, social and spiritual, that are called for if true Christian freedom is to survive. The concluding remarks are contributed by Cardinal Feltin, who draws the whole discussion together by pointing out that "to the immediate duty of inward purification, a duty imposed on the tyrannical spirit that lives in each of us, there should be added also an effort of the imagination, to guide social, economic and political technique in the direction of a way of life that will respect the transcendent uniqueness of the individual soul. Freedoms for the sake of freedom, freedom for the sake of approaching nearer to God, such is the Christian order which it is ours to promote. There is a solidarity among freedoms: the neglect of some causes the perishing of others, till the whole edifice crumbles."

In illustrating the point that it is a pastoral task to encourage freedom within the Church, Cardinal Feltin notes how in these days "initiatives are springing up everywhere". One of the most remarkable, and most publicized, in recent years has been the work of the Abbé Pierre for the homeless and destitute in the Cardinal's own archdiocese of Paris. What is not perhaps fully realized is that for some time before his dramatic appeal in February 1954 the Abbé Pierre had already been engaged in the work of providing homes for the homeless. Boris Simon, a journalist of great understanding and sympathy, has told the story in all its grandeur and simplicity, and it is a story well worth telling. The housing shortage, especially for the poor, was simply appalling in Paris and in 1949 the Abbé, then a member of the Chamber of Deputies, decided to do something practical about it. In the grounds of an old house he set up some army huts and called the place "Emmaus, Home of Social Action and International Relations". The international side was included because the Abbé was president of the Executive Committee of the Universal Movement for World Confederation. As more and more destitute families flocked to Emmaus, further buildings had to be put up and money had to be found. This story tells of the kind of people who came, of the means used to raise money (the chief was

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a band of ragpickers organized by the Abbé who combed dust-bins, dumps and rubbish heaps and sold their finds), above all of the comfort and hope brought to nearly two hundred families through the dogged persistence of the priest who heard "the cry of anguish emanating from the immense region all round us, the entreaty of the anonymous multitudes, for whom life has been rendered worse than death by the conditions in which they are obliged to exist". As the housing project has grown it has developed into a community to which well-wishers give their time, energy, skill, money, and in which those who have been sunk in the depths of despair find far more than warmth and shelter. They find a place where they can regain their dignity and their faith through a sense of belonging to a living group of which the inspiration is this humble but determined priest of God.

J. F.

The Discretionary Authority of the Ecclesiastical Judge in Matrimonial Trials of the First Instance. By Rev. Archibald M. Bottoms. Pp. ix + 266. (Canon Law Studies, n. 349.)

The Juridical Effects of the Sanatio in Radice. By Rev. Thomas Charles Ryan. Pp. x + 141. (Canon Law Studies, n. 355.)

Legislation and Requirements for Permissible Cohabitation in Invalid Marriages. By Rev. Bernard O. Sullivan. Pp. xvi + 186. (Canon Law Studies, n. 356.)

(The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C. \$2.00 each, paper.)

IN order to safeguard the marriage bond against unwarranted attacks on its validity, the Church has provided an elaborate system of procedural laws which seek to ensure that every accusation shall be proved to the hilt. Although it is the duty of the presiding judge to see that these rules are conscientiously observed, he must beware of interpreting them with a literal rigidity such as to defeat their ultimate purpose, which is to arrive at the truth. The law itself expressly leaves certain things to his discretion and expects him to use discretion also in other matters which of their nature require it. In the process of determining the extent of this discretionary authority Father Bottoms gives us, in the second part of his dissertation, an excellent summary of the prescribed procedure with the gaps filled in, and in his third section he completes this service with a well-balanced survey of the norms which govern the evaluation of judicial evidence. It is rare for a doctoral dissertation to be completely practical and useful, without being at the same time some-

what shallow. Father Bottoms has achieved this difficult task with creditable success, and his book can be recommended to all who have anything to do with matrimonial courts of first instance. It is well written, handsomely produced, and rounded off with a series of excellent indices.

Ready though the Church is to admit nullity of marriage when it is canonically proved to exist, she is even more solicitous in applying a remedy as often as circumstances allow, and the chief evidence of her solicitude is to be found in the extraordinary canonical provision for the convalidation of marriages, known as the *sanatio in radice*. The purpose of Father Ryan's dissertation is to study the juridical effects of this provision and the manner in which they are produced. It might seem that they are already so clearly enunciated in canons 1138-41 as to leave little room for a detailed commentary, but these canons are themselves the fruit of centuries of controversy, the echo of which persists on not a few points. Father Ryan deals very competently with these disputed questions and, from this point of view, his dissertation makes a useful contribution to canonical science. His style, however, is somewhat stilted and occasionally slipshod. Moreover, the proof-reading has been carelessly done. Whole lines are missing at the foot of page 74 and at the top of page 76, there is an unfinished sentence at the top of page 115, and there are too many misprints.

In these days of frequent divorce followed by attempted re-marriage it often happens that an invalid union cannot be convalidated, not even by *sanatio in radice*, and that, at the same time, the parties find it extremely difficult to separate altogether, without prejudice to natural obligations which they have contracted to each other and to their offspring, and which they cannot either in law or justice evade. Though the Code of Canon Law makes no provision for these cases, other than complete separation, an extreme remedy for which sanction can be found in the sources of canon law has been long acknowledged to exist in the system of cohabitation as brother and sister. Father Sullivan traces the history of this remedy which, after being restricted during many centuries to marriages invalid through impotence, was eventually applied to cases of *ligamen* and finally extended, under carefully circumscribed conditions, to other unions of irremediable nullity. His treatment of the moral and canonical issues involved is clear, prudent, comprehensive, a trifle repetitious in places, but written in a pleasant and easily readable style. By exploring so much hitherto uncharted ground he has done a valuable service to canonists, moralists, and especially to pastors of souls.

Precepts. By Edward Roelker, S.T.D., J.C.D. Pp. xii + 251. (St Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, New Jersey. \$3.50.)

At a university faculty of canon law, in addition to those professors who seek to ensure that the whole range of the law is adequately covered, there is usually at least one whose duty it is to take a small section of the law and squeeze the juice out of it, so that the students may learn by example the art of scholarly *approfondissement*. *Precepts*, like a recent work by the same author, *Invalidating Laws*, gives one the impression that Mgr Roelker must fulfil this function at the Catholic University of America. The Code of Canon Law contains numerous references to precepts, but, except in canon 24, it has very little to say about their juridical nature, effect, extension, or duration. By squeezing the last drop out of every text and reference, Mgr Roelker seeks to remedy this defect. He analyses the notion of a precept, contrasting it with that of a law, sentence and decree, distinguishes the different kinds of precept, studies the scope of canon 24, discovers who can give and receive precepts, and examines the matter with which they may deal, the length of time they may endure and the extent of the obligation they may impose. Then, after dealing more specifically with the various kinds of precept, judicial, administrative, penal and remedial, he concludes with chapters devoted to recourse and appeal from precepts and the ways in which they may cease.

To all but the specialist reader the subject may seem as dry as dust, but if there is any juice to be got out of it Mgr Roelker gets it. One would, however, have welcomed a more crisp and concise treatment. The author's approach is too reminiscent of the classroom. He pauses constantly to explain what he is going to say and remind us of what he has said, almost as if he were waiting for the note-takers to catch up and discover their whereabouts. A little more compression would have increased the impact of the book, without detriment to its informative value.

Marriage: A Medical and Sacramental Study. By Alan Keenan, O.F.M., and John Ryan, M.B. Pp. 337. (Sheed & Ward. 6s.)

This is a book which can be confidently recommended to any priest or doctor who has to deal with problems of sex, marriage, conjugal relationships, or sex instruction of the young, and indeed to any educated layman or laywoman who wants to make sure that his or her attitude to these problems is both medically sound and theologically correct. It is not perfect, but it is as good a work of its kind as has yet come to our notice. In the first place, it is written jointly

by a competent theologian who has not lost touch with pastoral practice and a gynaecologist whose wide professional experience has long been matched by his Christian faith and zeal. Furthermore, it is a joint effort in the proper sense of the words; for the medical and sacramental aspects of sex and marriage are not merely collated but interwoven, in such manner that a truly composite picture is presented. Finally, the plan is comprehensive, giving at least adequate coverage to every question that is likely to arise, and the doctrine throughout is clearly conveyed.

The book comprises four sections. In the first, the medical, moral and legal aspects of marriage are briefly but sufficiently outlined. The second and longest section then presents the medical picture of marriage, completed, where necessary, by appropriate moral and theological comments. The third section views the whole subject from the spiritual and sacramental point of view, and, though its structure is somewhat "bitty", the variety of topics with which it deals may well prove helpful to priests who read with an eye to sermon material. The value of the fourth section, which is concerned with sex education and pre-matrimonial instruction, is much enhanced by the fact that it is largely a record of practical experiments in this field and of the lessons which the authors have drawn from them; too often, in this thorny field, principle is divorced from practice, theory from fact.

The explanation of the canonical impediments to marriage, in the first part of the book, is perhaps too summary to be completely immune from the danger of misleading those who are unversed in the law, though it is unlikely to mislead any priest; and "coitus amplexus" (*sic*) appears, on page 200, for "amplexus reservatus". But, taking the book as a whole, there is little to criticize and a great deal to praise.

Christian Letters on Sex and Marriage. Edited by John Fox. Pp. 107. (Longmans. 6s.)

A SERIES of letters, actually written as such, are here exchanged between two real persons, Joan, a housewife and mother, and Robert, a journalist who became a married man before the series was completed. Both are apparently converts to the Church who had had a "murky past", and their aim in writing to each other was to straighten out their ideas of sex and marriage in the light of their Christian faith, partly for their mutual benefit and partly in the hope that the letters might eventually be worth publishing for the benefit of others. Joan's letters reveal her as a woman of good intentions and some sound notions, groping in a somewhat muddled and

emotional way towards a more completely balanced idea of sex than she had had in her misguided past. Robert is more theologically minded and more calmly rational. Both tend, however, at least in the earlier letters, to indulge in an exhibitionist candour reminiscent of the "sharing" of M.R.A. groups, and they call a spade a spade with a starkness which may disconcert some readers. Such value as the book may have lies in the fact that it sets the problem of sex adjustment in the framework of personal experience and may thereby succeed in ringing bells which would remain mute to the impact of a formal treatise. In view of the clear ruling of canon 1385, §1, 2°, the book should have been submitted to previous ecclesiastical censorship; it carries no indication that this has been done.

A Study of the Movement for German National Parishes in Philadelphia and Baltimore. By V. J. Fecher, S.V.D. Pp. xxxi + 283. (Analecta Gregoriana. Gregorian University, Rome. No price given.)

NATIONALISM is so pregnant with danger to Catholic unity that the Church, while prepared to concede "national" parishes, on a personal basis, to sufficiently large groups of a given tongue, reserves their erection and subsequent modification to the Holy See (canon 216, §4). Father Fecher's dissertation might be called an essay in justification of this precaution, except that his purpose, as a historian rather than a canonist, is to establish facts rather than prove a case. He has subjected to detailed study a minute fragment of American ecclesiastical history which, he finds, was symptomatic of the stresses and strains which nationalism was subsequently to impose on the Church in America. His work is addressed primarily to historians, but has interest for canonists, because the strife which it records turned principally on the claim of the national groups who had paid the piper, in building a church of their own, to call the tune in the appointment of pastors. The author has a pleasantly readable style and his scholarship is a credit to the Gregorian University.

L. L. McR.

Key Concepts of the Old Testament. By A. Gelin. Translated by G. R. Lamb. Pp. xiv + 94. (Sheed & Ward, 1955. 6s.)

THE excellent *Lectio Divina* series, which continues to offer us so much of the best in recent work on spiritual exegesis and biblical theology, has produced nothing better than Father Gelin's booklet *Les Idées Maîtresses de l'Ancien Testament* which first appeared in 1947. That it should now have been made available in English, and for such a reasonable price, is a blessing for which many will be very

grateful. For this is a brief but penetrating summary of the whole meaning of the Bible: its gradual revelation of man's relationship to God, of God's plans for mankind, and of the way of salvation. Where we tend so often to treat the Bible as a quarry of proof texts of which one is as static and complete as another, Father Gelin insists on placing the texts in their right setting, so that they will be seen as expressions (and often very inadequate expressions) of a plan which developed extremely slowly, in the manner of human things:

"The Old Testament is the history of the people that lived the great realities—Election, Promise, Covenant, Kingdom, Exile, Community. Its experiences, its gropings, its setbacks, its dreams, its conclusions, make up the material of this history. It was a people moved by a religious impulse impelling it always one stage further, rethinking on a more spiritual level what in the first place it had lived and thought in a way less worthy of God. The Old Testament is the history of continual forward movements: a novitiate, a growing spiritualization. . . . We shall not be surprised to find that this process, which extends over nearly two thousand years, presents itself to us as a history which, though it may be 'ascending and finalized' towards Christ, is nevertheless subject to periods of lassitude and even aberration."

And strange as the experience may be to many, it is in fact only by re-living this process from within that we can hope to see the Bible (the New Testament included) in its true perspective. For this history is ours, and its great themes must be returned to again and again if we are to appreciate in its fullness the meaning of Christ who was their meeting point. Even the familiar words "Our Father who art in heaven" appear in a new light when they are seen as the final harmonious synthesis of the two Old Testament themes of God's nearness and God's transcendence. In this way each Key Concept is traced through to Christ, who appears ever more clearly at the end of each chapter as the fulfilment, and more than fulfilment, of all the hopes of men. Here is exegesis which is positive and nourishing, and which will surely be seized upon eagerly by those who have for too long been fed only with the nineteenth-century apologetic which is still so prominent in many of our commentaries.

In a translation which is generally adequate, Mr Lamb fails at times to render the meaning of the original (e.g. pp. 57, 59, 77, 78, 84). He would have done well to reproduce Father Gelin's translation of the original texts on which much of the author's argument is based; three misprints in Hebrew, Greek and German words are

faithfully transcribed from the original; Hebrew words throughout still wear their French acute accents; the Babylonian poem is given in its gallicized form *Enuma Elisch*. There are other indications that Mr Lamb is not a specialist in the subject-matter of a book which he has, on the whole, competently translated.

God's Heralds: A Guide to the Prophets of Israel. By J. Chaine. Translated by Brendan McGrath, O.S.B. Pp. xiv + 236. (J. F. Wagner and Herder, 1955. 24s.)

It is a sad fact, but true, that France and Germany have for many years been far ahead of us in Catholic biblical scholarship, and will probably continue to be so for many years to come. What is even sadder, and even truer, is that the English-speaking public is becoming less and less capable of enjoying the fruits of their labours, and that translations of their works are no longer a luxury for those who cannot be bothered to consult the original, but a stark necessity without which we shall lag even further behind modern scholarship than we do by nature.

Chaine's *Introduction à la lecture des Prophètes* first appeared in 1932, and immediately became a classic. In simple and non-technical language it discusses the phenomenon of Prophetism, and then takes up each of the prophets, from Amos to Daniel, in chronological order, placing each in the historical, cultural and religious background against which he spoke. The prophets have never made easy reading, but they will make quite unintelligible reading unless they are placed in their context. To have done this preliminary work so concisely and so clearly is the particular merit of this book. Since it was written, scholars have taken critical positions which are far more liberal (and fruitful) than was possible in 1932, and very few would today be as cautious as Chaine on such questions as the authorship of Isaiah xl-lxvi, or the identity of Emmanuel and the Servant, or the literary form of the book of Daniel. But these are minor considerations and do not affect the value of the book, which is still, for those for whom it was designed (seminarians, parish clergy and educated laymen), the best handbook on the subject.

The present edition has omitted, understandably enough, the exclusively French bibliography and, less understandably, the photographs which brought such life to the original. But perhaps this is balanced by the useful addition of a chronological table and an index of names. The maps, too, are better done than those in the original, although Chaine's were free from misprints. It is the numerous misprints in the rest of the book that show it to be, for all its elegance, a rather slipshod production. Some of them may be

excused as printer's errors (distaster, Aremnia, Sythians, conqueror, phophet, sacriligious, etc.). Less excusable are the misquotation of references, inconsistency in the spelling of proper names, the reproduction of misprints in the original, and errors in translation.

Portrait of Saint Luke. By A. H. N. Green-Armytage. Pp. 204. (Burns & Oates, 1955. 12s. 6d.)

THE author who gave us such a shrewd portrait of St John in his *John Who Saw* has now attempted to do the same sort of thing for St Luke. Here it is a question of reading between the lines of the third Gospel and of the Acts in order to find how far St Luke reveals himself in his style, in his interests, in the use he has made of his sources, in what he has emphasized, what he has minimized, what he has omitted altogether. It will surprise the reader that this sort of thing can be done in so beguiling a way that he will be very loth to lay the book down. Not that there is any lack of solid learning: the book gives constant evidence of the author's wide reading and research. But Mr Green-Armytage can wear this learning lightly, and refuses to crush the reader with his erudition. "It is a man I am in search of, not a theory of documentary interdependence."

The portrait of Luke which emerges is that of an educated man (perhaps the best educated in the circle of early Christians), who was yet modest and retiring, and transparently unaffected; who had not the wide scope of Paul nor the deep penetration of John, but who had a feeling for his fellow men unsurpassed by them and was more skilful than they in giving expression to his thoughts; the *scriba mansuetudinis Christi* who saw Christianity as a religion of joy and gaiety, and, when that is impossible, of charity and compassion. It is a fascinating portrait. It may suffer at times from an oversimplification of the process in which the New Testament was composed, which gives internal evidence of being far more complicated than Mr Green-Armytage supposes. But it is at least lifelike, which is more than can be said of many others.

It must not be imagined that such portrait-painting is done for its own sake, as if it were merely a sort of literary game. It is done in an earnest desire to discover the true meaning of God's Word which has come to us through the human characteristics of the sacred authors. We have for too long treated the Scriptures as if they were all uniformly written by one hand, in a style as stereotyped as our printing of them. This pays full tribute to their common divine origin, but it is not the full truth, and the divine message itself will be misunderstood if we do not take account of the mental make-up, the education, the interests, even the prejudices of the individual

human authors through whom it has filtered. It is this that Mr Green-Armytage has done for Luke, and in a most readable fashion. We eagerly await the companion volumes on Mark and Matthew.

H. J. R.

What the Church Gives Us. By Rt. Rev. James P. Kelly and Mary T. Ellis. Pp. 152 (Kenedy, New York. \$2.50.)

Treasure Untold. By Rev. Albert J. Shamon. Pp. 222 (Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland. \$3.50.)

BOTH these are volumes of theology-for-the-laity, but neither is of the quality to arouse a reviewer to enthusiasm. The first is primarily for the enquiring non-Catholic: short chapters covering Creation, Incarnation, Church, Sacraments and Last Things, but not the Commandments. One pictures the envisaged reader as some middle-aged business "executive" who has never thought about religion and wants to know what these Catholics have to say. From this standpoint a merit of the book is perhaps a certain firm clarity in statement, but no attempt is made to present the Church's teaching acceptably. The approach is less hard-headed than Sheed, less intellectually sympathetic than Mgr Knox, less carefully explanatory than Father F. J. Ripley. It can miss finer points—e.g. "We may compare the vision of a man entering heaven to that of a blind man whose sight is suddenly restored." Surely the real comparison would be with a man born blind? On pp. 54-5 there is a much too rough-and-ready account of the Church's infallibility: the impression is given that the Church is infallible 'in all its "official teaching" (p. 54), and that the "ordinary" teaching of the Church means the same as "day-to-day instruction of the faithful" (p. 55). What is the use of technical terms if we give them a debased and popular meaning?

The other volume, beautifully printed and produced, is a series of "reflections" on the articles of the Creed, forty-seven chapters altogether. The reflections, culled from many sources, are often appropriate, but too often couched in a forced and turgid rhetoric that reads like a bad imitation of Bishop Fulton Sheen. The author has a good eye for a telling anecdote or illustration, but here too sometimes his judgement deserts him, as for instance on p. 14. "The truths of faith might be likened to a Jack-in-the-box; the spring pushing against the Jack-in-the-box, to the intellect straining against the obscurity of these truths; the lid, holding the spring in place, to the will. If sin weakens the will, its power to restrain the intellect becomes proportionately less effective. If the will is sufficiently

weakened, the lid pops off; Jack jumps out—faith is lost.” Of course *omnis illustratio claudicat*, but even less appropriate is the grinning cat of *Alice in Wonderland* (p. 138) used in connexion with supernatural gifts in the risen body, ours and our Lord’s.

The Pictorial Story of Westminster Cathedral. By Mgr Gordon Wheeler, Administrator. (Pitkin Pictorials, 9 John Street, W.C.1. 2s. 6d.)

THOSE Catholics who were born around seventy years ago and have grown up, so to speak, with Westminster Cathedral, surely entertain for it a feeling which is unique and not very describable. Westminster Cathedral is a place where one goes to pray, and so it naturally comes to be intertwined or associated with all the heartfelt occasions or crises of a lifetime. It will be so no doubt for future generations too, but they will not have the experience that has been ours, of seeing the Cathedral growing and changing as a close friend grows and changes as he companions us through life. All who love the Cathedral will be glad to have this descriptive account of it, in which Mgr Wheeler says everything that needs to be said from the historical and artistic aspect, and Cardinal Griffin contributes a welcoming foreword. The Cathedral (he truly says) “grows on one. Its majestic proportions, its lofty domes, its spacious sanctuary and beautiful side-chapels, all help to direct those who enter to the true worship of God.” The numerous excellent photographs are of course the most striking feature of the book, but they should not entirely divert attention from the text. One of the most obvious uses of this valuable book will be to help those who find themselves called on to introduce visitors, perhaps from abroad, to the beauties of our Cathedral.

Red Letter Feasts for Catholic Schools. By P. Flynn. (Burns Oates. 3s. 6d.)

EVEN the liturgical-minded may doubt whether a school-reader specially devoted to the liturgical year (such as this book is meant to be) is the ideal approach. Would it not be better to keep the religious teaching—doctrine, scripture, liturgy, history—as one organic whole, at the elementary-school stage anyhow? A doctrine-and-scripture reader based on the liturgical year might have much in its favour. Accepting, however, the purpose of our present author, we cannot feel that he has really succeeded at it. His conception of the liturgical year is rather Garden-of-the-soul, much concerned with “Movable feasts”, and one may come across a rather odd judgement such as “Lent is also similar to the Jewish Pasch”. It is very much a school-book, dry and unimaginative. What use is it,

for instance, to say of St David, "Many legends and stories are told of his life"? One vivid anecdote would be worth a dozen such generalities. The material is doled out in weekly "lessons", it may be for Easter or Pentecost, or it may be for some saint's day; a little information, accurate but uninspiring, is given about each, and the gospel usually printed in full. Some perfunctory "exercises" in question form follow each lesson. The illustrations are small, smudgy photographs of old masters, thoroughly depressing. Altogether this well-intentioned book can hardly be recommended, except perhaps as a handy aid-book for uninformed and unresourceful teachers.

F. M.

Dogmatic and Scriptural Foundation for Catechists. By Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D., LL.D. (Confraternity Publications, 508 Marshall Street, Paterson 3, N.J., U.S.A. 50 cents.)

The Holy Spirit and His Work. By Rev. Leo J. Trese. (Confraternity Publications, U.S.A.)

HERE are two booklets, both from the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (U.S.A.), illustrating two very different ways of attempting the same thing—adult religious education with a view to lay-apostolate.

The first one consists of the learned author's notes for classes given by him commenting on Baltimore Catechism No. 3. The aim is theological clarity, and it is certainly achieved. What the word "Scriptural" is doing in the title of the booklet is rather a mystery; the notes are entirely concerned with theological or canon-law points. They do not make any linguistic concession to the layman. Indeed the book as it stands must be often unintelligible to anybody who has not done a course of text-book theology. For instance on p. 6: "The former" [procession of the Son from the Father] "is by way of intellectual cognition—in other words the terminus of the act whereby the Father understands that the divine nature is the Word or Son". Has the word "that" crept in perhaps by misprint here? But even when this was cleared up, such a sentence would be tough going for lay-students. The author would no doubt reply that these notes were only summaries distributed to the catechists after the lectures. Yes, but *why* should we inflict such language on catechists at all? They can't pass it on, at any rate let us hope they won't try to. Or should we hope they *will*? Another bit (p. 12): "We are taught that a person can be guilty of a sin *in cause*—that is, even though he is not conscious of the sin at the time he actually performs the action, he is *guilty* if he deliberately places a cause from which

the sin will result." Phrases like formal object, impetratory and satisfactory value, morose delectation, are common form in this booklet. Sins are ticketed mortal or venial with the customary confidence of the manualist: "Nowadays the absolute sum for grave matter in theft in our country would seem to be about \$75." The absurdities which result from telling children that they commit a mortal sin by missing Mass are well illustrated when our author writes:

"Some Catholic theologians believe that it is not a lie to tell a falsehood to one who is unjustly trying to find out the truth. For example, if a child is asked publicly in school if he missed Mass on Sunday, he may reply in the negative (even though he did miss Mass) because it is unjust to require a person to confess his mortal sins publicly."

Father Leo Trese's book is a different proposition altogether, and can be cordially recommended to teachers of religion, for instance, in the middle classes of grammar schools. Actually it is intended for what are called in America religion discussion-groups (of adults), though there seems to be no real discussion involved: just the reading-round of a text-book, with some answering of set questions at intervals. This may not be discussion, but it is one kind of teaching and Father Trese's book makes good use of the method. His "centre of interest" is the work of the Holy Ghost in the mystical Body and in the soul. From this angle he surveys Grace, the Virtues, the Gifts and Fruits, the life of the Church, the four Marks, the last things and suchlike matters; not perhaps in exciting fashion, but all solid and practical and readable (yes, readable aloud). When occasionally he finds a technical term unavoidable, such as "appropriation" in regard to our language about the Trinity, he takes a paragraph or two to make the new word thoroughly clear. Like Father Cooper (of the Catholic University a generation ago), Father Trese does succeed in making religion *relevant* to common life.

The chief reflection arising from a study of these two books is about the urgent need for theology to be permeated by the apostolic and catechetical outlook, in place of the contrary process (which has gone much too far in the immediate past) of theologians imposing their outlook and terminology on catechists. This need is the great thesis of the continental catechists at present, and the new German catechism is an example of the change which is taking place, and which comes none too soon to match the efficacy of the apostolate with the wide-open opportunities of the modern situation.

Seeing the Faith. Some suggestions for Visual Aids for Teachers of Religion. Edited by F. O. Edwards, S.J. (Burns Oates. 21s.)

THERE are a few teachers who love using hands and tools and spend their leisure time in constructing class-room material of one sort and another—models, peepshows, games, doll's houses, charts of greater and greater elaboration; sometimes they can communicate their constructional enthusiasm to their class, and "projects" of Eastern villages or cardboard cathedrals burgeon into space-occupying existence, to the admiration of visitors and the less favourable comment of trade-union-minded colleagues, who profess their inability to see what all this has to do with real education; or with real religion, as the case may be. It must be a matter of temperament. Anyhow, whatever it is the author or editor of this book has it; he has in addition the urge to write about it, which he does here with clarity and fluency and plenty of diagrams and photographs, and full instructions for making the dioramas, model altars, relief maps, catechism-jigsaws and electric quizzes in which his soul delighteth. Like-minded teachers will cheerfully put this well-produced book on their requisition list, and think it cheap at twenty-one shillings; the others will realize that it is not their cup of tea.

F. H. D.

The Christian Imagination. By Justus George Lawler. Pp. 190. (The Newman Press. \$3.00.)

AN American Catholic layman gives us under this title a series of essays or, as he calls them, studies in religious thought. There is little connexion evident between the various articles, although they are grouped under headings. The main feature in common is a vigorous approach to all subjects, in which the author does not hesitate to criticize the greatest of thinkers, if he feels this is justified by his thesis. As Father John Oesterreicher says in his introduction, he welcomes this layman's discussion of spiritual and theological problems, even though he cannot always see eye-to-eye with the author, for instance in his criticism of Cardinal Newman.

Among those who come in for a certain amount of forthright expression of disapproval are those whom he terms the seventeenth-century writers with an anti-intellectual and anti-natural bias. Mr Lawler is anxious in this matter to distinguish between the essentials of the mind, say of a religious founder or foundress, and the *minutiae* which clung round these, simply because of the time in which the person concerned lived. He maintains that in many cases the real spirit of the founder is being lost, because the *minutiae*, long since old-fashioned, are kept up as a point of honour.

Much of his criticism is sensible and constructive. Perhaps too often he tends to label as myopic the outlook of someone with whom he disagrees. But he covers a wide field from the Loss of Continuity to the Religious Life, from the Reformer in the Church to the Christian Formation of Youth, to give a selection of his essays' titles.

The layman has need to study these matters almost as much as the priest. For he is in daily contact with a society which puts a question mark against the principles and beliefs of the Church. He must be sufficiently interested and willing to develop his mind to enquire after the answers, for this is the day-to-day apostolate of an educated person. Such a book as this should be welcomed as healthy and constructive. It should be a ready reply to those outside the Church who consider Catholicism impossible, because they believe that no Catholic is allowed to think.

The Meaning of Monastic Life. By Louis Bouyer. Translated by Kathleen Pond. Pp. 209. (Burns & Oates. 215.)

THERE is little doubt that the world in general fails to grasp the meaning of monastic life. The Catholic world itself does not always get the right perspective. How many there are who think secretly or contend loudly that these men waste their lives; that they would be better employed in God's service among the poor. Father Bouyer, who is not himself a monk, but an Oratorian, brings a freshness to the study of this traditional way of life. He is not only theoretical in his approach; he also devotes half his work to the practical application of the theory he has developed. And, in passing, he gives the lie to those who believe that the monk is a drone, by pointing out that he is expected to give his fair share to the world community, either by the work of his hands or his mind, though these two remain subsidiary to the main duty of his life, which is prayer.

What then is the basic meaning of monastic life? Father Bouyer states categorically that it is the search for God. To confirm his thesis, he uses the Psalms, Philo, St Augustine, St Benedict, Wordsworth and Francis Thompson, together with many others. Having made this clear, he investigates the angelic life in a fine chapter which sets our minute portion of creation in the right perspective. This leads him on to see the monk as realizing Christ's image of the grain of wheat which must die to give life. Through this entry into a new life the monk continues his search for God "in Spiritu, per Filium, ad Patrem".

So much for the theory. In practice the life begins with the stripping of self or detachment which is the foundation of the monks' way of living. Then it continues in the whole routine of the day and the

year, moving with unhurried pace through prayer, penance and work. These three are strengthened, fertilized, given meaning by the three great occupations of each day, *lectio divina*, the *Opus Dei* and the Mass.

It could be said that Father Bouyer is at a disadvantage when speaking of the very special vocation of the monk, since he himself is not one. On the other hand, he has achieved a clear and brilliant analysis, which looks to the sublime ideal of monasticism and is outspoken in its demand for the daily pursuit of God. For him, the monk cannot be real if he has come to terms with himself, is lukewarm, is a compromiser. Such a man no longer lives truth. He may leave the silence which is essential, because in the silence he is alone with the alone, and this he cannot face. Yet this is basic to the *conversio morum* of St Benedict, pre-figured in St John the Baptist, and assured by strict observance of the three vows. Work, therefore, must not become an end in itself, as it does appear to do with some who are schoolmasters full-time as well as being monks, rather than being monks who are schoolmasters. For the silence, the *lectio divina*, the community *Opus Dei*, are all integral parts of this life, deepening the impulse towards the world to come.

Father Bouyer has done a real service. His work should be read not only in the monastery as was intended, but also to clarify the ideas of those who seek God outside the enclosure. In this readable translation the only thing to deter anyone will be the price involved.

St Thérèse of Lisieux. By J. B. Morton. Pp. 112. (Burns & Oates. 9s. 6d.)

WHEN I was talking to an eminent Methodist preacher a year or two ago he asked me whether there was any particular saint whom I would suggest he should study. When I suggested St Thérèse of Lisieux, he was a little surprised, possibly even shocked, for he mentioned that he could not understand a person like myself being interested in her, when there were such fine examples for priests as the Curé of Ars.

Yet, it is one of the phenomena of modern times that the appeal of St Thérèse should be as much to men as to women, as much to the "tough" as to the sophisticated. The wide range of her appeal draws in just such a person as Mr Morton, and his work upon her is important for that reason. He is well known to the world of print for his writing on quite other themes, in quite another vein, and yet he can produce a book like this, with a subject-matter so strange to the ordinary world.

Therefore when I say that I do not think it can be stated that

there is anything very new or exciting in the text, nothing, that is, which gives more enlightenment than we have had already from that host of writers who have chosen this enclosed nun as their subject, I do not mean to reflect on the value of the work. Rather, I am sure that its main usefulness will be found in the author's plain writing as a man of the world, who has gained inspiration from a life so very far removed from his own: the cloister of the last century energizing the world of today. Many can see no connexion between the two, for them the ideas of Thérèse are childish and falsely idealistic. Mr Morton is wiser and can teach others to be wiser, by writing in all simplicity of the way her spirituality can help us all to live closer to God.

Two Portraits of St Teresa of Lisieux. By Etienne Robo. Pp. 205. (Sands & Co. 9s. 6d.)

THE scientific approach to historical research has revolutionized the lives of the saints. Indeed it is understood that at some future date those lively and often bloodthirsty lessons of the second nocturn of Matins will be drastically expurgated. Even now the questions are raised—Was there a St Philomena? What is the truth of St Joseph of Cupertino's flying exploits? Was St Cecilia in reality neither a virgin nor a martyr?

At the present moment, and nearer our own day historically, it has become the fashion to write about St Teresa of Lisieux. Without a doubt she is the saint who has had most worldwide appeal in this century, yet the estimates of her vary from the panegyric which can say nothing in the least derogatory to the "explode-the-myth" type which finds it hard to discover anything worth saying of her. Father Robo, himself French and of her period, has attempted to give us something in between the two. As he puts it, his purpose is to give "a restatement of the story of St Teresa in the detached, objective and impartial spirit of an historian".

The difficulty which faces anyone who wants to know "the truth" about St Teresa is this. She wrote, not originally for publication, without any idea of how to start an autobiography. In her first chapter she tells how she knelt in front of the statue of our Lady and "begged that dear Mother to guide my hand, and so ensure that only what was pleasing to her should find a place there". Subsequently as her life was ending she said to Pauline (Mère Agnes): "You must revise everything I have written. If you think fit, leave out some things and add others that I have explained to you in conversation; it will be the same as if I was doing it myself. Remember this and have no scruple on this score."

But the modern contention, beginning in France most forcibly with Père Combes, is that the story has been cut about by Pauline, that the saint herself was largely under her influence, and that we have been given a false picture. Some go so far as to say that the doctrine of the Little Way was made up for her and that even the Pope was deceived. Now, those who have suggested these things have done so in the scholarly attempt to reach the truth, or perhaps better to adjust the balance against the over-pious panegyrics. The present book is written because the author is "convinced that the greatest respect for saints can be reconciled with the truth and even with the criticism of their human weaknesses and oddities". To do this, he carefully analyses the photographs, the convent life, the character of St Teresa and the influence of Pauline. Many of the conclusions he reaches are startling, not to say disturbing. His work on the character of the saint is more that of a psycho-analyst than an historian, and he pronounces her a neuropath. The impression I received all the time that I was reading was that Father Robo was smashing down a preconceived idea, explaining the truth as he saw it, and then saying: "Of course, however, this seems to detract from the character and holiness of the saint, in fact it makes her more admirable." The trouble was that I could not always see that it did so, because I was left questioning whether from a distance Father Robo had made a correct interpretation. At any rate, I should say that there was a real danger of misunderstanding among some who read this book. I hope it will not be so; I hope it will do the good that Father Robo has purposed in it. I suppose I am one of the more simple faithful who do not like their pictures shattered!

M. H.

The Interior Carmel. By John C. H. Wu. Pp. xi + 257. (Sheed & Ward. 12s. 6d.)

THE author, who has been described as one of China's most brilliant legal minds, was converted to the Faith in 1937 through the influence of St Thérèse of Lisieux. All his life he had been searching for a mother and in his early forties he found her in the Catholic Church. He found also the supreme gift a mother can give: love.

Since his conversion supernatural love has been the object of his study and writing. Of the present work, which is his masterpiece and has taken fifteen years to complete, he tells us that the *leit-motif* is Psalm 22, the Psalm of the Good Shepherd. It expounds the mystical teaching of St John of the Cross in the light of the eight beatitudes; its scheme is the traditional three ways of the spiritual life, but here seen and presented as the budding, flowering and ripening of love.

It is a meaty book, but never heavy; the author has a gift of simple exposition in faultless English. He interweaves his own fine thinking with numerous quotations from some hundred Catholic saints and writers, so that his work has the added merit of being almost an anthology of mystical writings.

As a Chinese, Dr Wu is naturally concerned to compare Christian spirituality with ancient Chinese philosophy. He finds in Lao Tse and Confucius, with their doctrine of abnegation, the pre-eminence of love, the three stages of growth in wisdom, and so on, a true preparation of soul, on the natural plane, for the full supernatural wisdom of the saints, as taught and exemplified by the great Carmelites and St Francis de Sales. The Chinese who is true to his ancient traditions is "anima naturaliter Christiana"; and this makes more poignant one's sense of the evil forces which today hold China in thrall. Fortunately Dr Wu, daily communicant and contemplative layman, has a secure home in the United States.

J. C.

Truth and Freedom. By Louis De Raeymaecker and other Professors of the University of Louvain. Pp. vii + 133. (Duchesne University Press. \$3 in cloth, \$2.25 in paper.)

THIS book was written in response to an invitation made by President Eisenhower in his capacity as President of Columbia University as a part of the bi-centenary celebrations of the foundation of the University. It contains seven essays of notable value, originally written in French, which are now offered in an English translation that might very well be improved in places where it is needlessly servile. Professor Dondeyne certainly reads more satisfactorily in the original French than in this translation. Professor Aubert's essay on "The Freedom of the Catholic Historian" is of particular value, and Mgr De Raeymaecker's essay on Cardinal Mercier's ideals of Freedom of Research in science and philosophy should be brought to the notice of all admirers of his great work.

E. A. S.

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